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*Seventy Years of the Louisiana Historical Association**

By KENNETH TRIST URQUHART

who holds the M.A. degree from Tulane University and who is instructor of history, St. Mary's Dominican College.

THE YEARS FOLLOWING the Civil War were trying ones for New Orleans, for although it had been spared destruction from military bombardment it had suffered military occupation, and there was extensive evidence to testify to the many hardships which beset the Crescent City. The economic life of the once-proud ante bellum port was in a chaotic condition. Her old merchant class had been nearly wiped out by the war; and many of her banks held worthless notes and Confederate money and bonds. Citizens, returning from the war, crowded the labor market; country folk, seeing little future on ravaged farms and plantations, had thronged to the city in search of employment.

Especially depressing was the destitute condition of Confederate widows, disabled veterans, and war orphans. Under normal conditions it would have been difficult providing for such a large number of unfortunates; but under the circumstances, the task was one of indescribable proportions. It is to the credit of the returning Confederate veterans that they did not allow the wants of their own families to blind them to the needs of these less fortunate victims of the Civil War.

Although most of the survivors of the Confederate Army did not reach New Orleans until May, 1865, by mid-June

* A paper read at the Louisiana Historical Association convention at Alexandria, March 21, 1959.

they were actively engaged in fund-raising campaigns for the needy, ably assisted by the ladies of the city who never tired in their support of relief activities. Charity races were held at the Fair Grounds; noted Louisiana historian and statesman, Charles Gayarré, was enlisted to lecture for the relief of the Jefferson Davis family; and the first legislature which met after the close of hostilities was induced to establish a home for disabled veterans. In order to make their relief work more effective, the survivors of different commands banded together into benevolent associations, adopting names reminiscent of their old units. Among these were "The Fifth Company, Washington Artillery Benevolent Association," "The Washington Relief Association," and "Gibson's Brigade Benevolent Association."[1]

By the summer of 1866, the Confederate veterans of New Orleans had accomplished much in relieving the hardships of the more unfortunate victims of the Civil War in their city; but it was felt that even more could be accomplished by uniting all the separate benevolent associations into one large organization. With this object in mind, the "Soldiers' Relief Convention" met in Lyceum Hall on July 17, 1866. The spirit of enthusiasm displayed by this gathering was so great that it aroused the fears of Federal authorities, who, soon afterwards, ordered the suppression of Confederate organizations in New Orleans. Henceforth, the work of these associations had to be conducted in the names of the ladies, quietly, and often in secrecy.[2]

Almost from their founding, the Confederate associations in New Orleans had contemplated expanding their programs to include historical activities. The suppression of these organizations ended any plans which they had made in this respect; but, upon the first relaxation of military repression in the city, leading Confederate veterans met and organized the Southern Historical Society in May, 1869. Dr. Benjamin M. Palmer, the famed Presbyterian divine, was elected its first President, and Confederate Generals Bragg, Beauregard,

[1] New Orleans *Daily States*, June 18, 1897.
[2] *Ibid.*

Buckner, and Maury were among its founders. Great hopes were entertained for the organization and branches were contemplated in every Southern state. Unfortunately, the political unrest in the Reconstruction South interfered with its growth; it languished, and in 1873 it was moved to Richmond, much to the regret of the Confederate veterans in New Orleans.[3]

With the end of Reconstruction and the overthrow of the Carpet-bag government in the mid-1870's, local Confederate veterans were able to resume their activities without fear of molestation. The Association of the Army of Northern Virginia was chartered in 1876 and in the following year the Association of the Army of Tennessee was organized. Other organizations with similar aims were formed, among them the Association of Veterans of Confederate States Cavalry and the Washington Artillery Association. These Confederate organizations devoted themselves chiefly to relief and memorial activities; but, they also displayed an active interest in historical matters. Through the efforts of historical committees each group was able to collect many relics and historical documents. In time these formed valuable collections which were highly prized by the associations which owned them; but they were not open to the view of the general public. Since the collections were kept separately, they were often poorly housed and consequently exposed to possible loss and destruction. It became increasingly evident to the veterans that something had to be done to insure the future preservation and wider utilization of the valuable historical materials in their possession.[4]

Finally in 1887-1888, Colonel A. J. Lewis, President of the Association of the Army of Tennessee, proposed to the other Confederate Veteran organizations that they unite with the Association of the Army of Tennessee in establishing a common place of deposit for their historical material. His

[3] *Confederate Veteran*, VI (December, 1898), 547; New Orleans *Daily States*, June 18, 1897; E. Merton Coulter, *The South during Reconstruction 1865-1877* (Baton Rouge, 1947), 182-183.

[4] New Orleans *Daily States*, June 18, 1897.

proposal was given careful consideration by the veterans; and Tulane University, the Washington Artillery Hall, the Howard Library, and other places were considered as possible locations for the contemplated joint depository. In the early part of February, 1889, the Association of the Army of Tennessee issued a circular letter to the other veterans' organizations asking that they appoint committees to consider the matter. The committees met jointly, and, after discussing the merits of various locations, decided to respond to an invitation from Frank T. Howard to examine the Howard Memorial Library at Lee Circle.

Howard offered to provide them with suitable space in the library in which to keep their valuable manuscripts and to display their Confederate relics, and the committees voted unanimously to recommend his offer to their associations. Then Howard suggested that possibly the veterans might be interested in enlarging the scope of their proposed joint collection to include relics, books, and documents connected with all periods of Louisiana history. Howard went on to propose that, in the event their associations were interested in doing this and the library could not provide adequate space for the enlarged collection, he "could promise the addition of an annex where the relics could be stored and exhibited in a fire proof building forever." The veterans enthusiastically accepted Howard's generous offer, and their associations soon voted to unite their collections in the Howard Library and to expand the scope of the joint collection to include all periods of Louisiana history.[5]

The idea of the formation of a Louisiana historical association came as a natural development of Howard's proposal. Expressing the belief that there was "plenty of good material" for an historical society, Howard actively assisted the Confederate veterans in organizing a state historical association. After securing copies of the charters and by-laws of several

[5] *Ibid.*, June 18, 1897; Manuscript notes on the founding of the Louisiana Historical Association, in the Louisiana Historical Associaton Papers, Lousiana Historical Association Collection (Howard-Tilton Memorial Library, Tulane University).

other state historical societies, he and representatives of the veterans drew up a charter and by-laws for the new organization. The final draft of the charter was adopted in April, 1889, and the Louisiana Historical Association was incorporated under the laws of the State of Louisiana on the eleventh of that month.[6]

In outlining the aims of the Association, the charter provided that: "The objects and purposes for which this corporation is formed are to collect such books, pamphlets, papers, documents, flags, maps, plans, charts, paintings, engravings, lithographs and other pictorial representations, manuscripts and other things appertaining to the history of the territory of Louisiana, both before and after its cession to the United States, and especially the collection and preservation of all papers, documents, relics, etc., relating to the War between the States from 1861 to 1865. And this corporation shall have the right to compile and publish and to have compiled and published, books, plans, charts and other papers and documents relating to the purposes for which it is organized, and to apply for and hold copyrights and patents necessary to its protection."[7]

The powers of the Association were vested in a board of governors, consisting of twenty-five members, equally distributed among representatives of the Association of the Army of Tennessee, the Association of the Army of Northern Virginia, the Battalion of Washington Artillery, the Association of Veterans of Confederate States Cavalry, and the trustees of the Howard Memorial Library Association. The members of the first board of governors were: J. B. Wilkinson, Jr., George H. Frost, R. S. Venables, J. K. Renaud, and W. P. Johnston, representing the Association of the Army of Tennessee; John T. Purves, E. D. Willett, Peter Blake, T. S. Campbell, and Thomas Higgins, representing the Association of the Army of Northern Virginia; W. M. Owen, E. I. Kursheedt, C. L. C. Dupuy, Joseph H. DeGrange, and J. H. Dug-

[6] Frank T. Howard to "Dear Col." (William Miller Owen), March 9, 1889, in the Louisiana Historical Association Papers; *Act of Incorporation and By-Laws of the Louisiana Historical Association* (New Orleans, 1915), 5.

[7] *Ibid.*, 6-7.

gan, representing the Battalion of Washington Artillery; J. H. Behan, D. A. Given, T. E. Davis, S. S. Prentiss, and W. R. Lyman, representing the Association of Veterans of Confederate States Cavalry; Frank T. Howard, G. T. Beauregard, J. N. Galleher, Robert Maxwell and Charles E. Fenner, representing the board of trustees of the Howard Memorial Library Association. This board elected as the first officers of the association: Frank T. Howard, President; W. R. Lyman, First Vice-President; William Miller Owen, Second Vice-President; D. A. Given, Secretary and Treasurer; and Charles A. Nelson, Custodian.[8]

The by-laws of the Association provided for a general membership, consisting of "white persons of good moral character, who were in the service of the Southern Confederacy, and of their white descendants of good moral character, and also of white persons of good moral character who were not in such service, but who have been citizens of Louisiana for more than five years previous to their application for membership." It also provided for an honorary membership to be chosen by the board of governors. The initiation fee of the Association was set at $2.00 and the dues were fixed at $1.00 per annum.[9]

The first board of governors wasted no time in launching the activities of the Louisiana Historical Association. The collections belonging to the various Confederate veterans' organizations were moved into a compartment of the Howard Library provided for the use of the Association. Under the enthusiastic influence of Colonel William Miller Owen, the Louisiana Historical Association's collection grew with such rapidity that it was evident almost immediately that it would soon outgrow its quarters in the library. True to his promise, Frank T. Howard induced the board of trustees of the Howard Library to acquire a lot of ground which adjoined the library, fronting Camp Street. In early July, 1889, he reported that he intended to erect new quarters for the Asso-

[8] *Ibid.*, 7-8.
[9] *Ibid.*, 13-14.

ciation at this location and that he expected to have plans for the new building drawn that very summer.[10]

While preparations were being made for the erection of this structure, the officers of the Association devoted themselves enthusiastically to the work of enlarging the general membership and within a short time the number of names on the membership rolls increased considerably. Efforts were made to publicize the work of the Association and interested parties were encouraged to place historical relics, documents, and books in the Association's collection. Special efforts were made to induce prominent Confederate veterans to turn over their personal effects. Accordingly, President Jefferson Davis, Commodore William Wallace Hunter, General Joseph E. Johnston, and General John B. Gordon were elected honorary members of the Association. Although President Davis died shortly after his election, his widow was contacted by Colonel Owen, a friend of the Davis family, and she agreed to place a large part of her husband's papers and mementoes in the Association's collection. As a result, over 2,000 of the President's belongings were entrusted to the safekeeping of the new organization. Among other prominent Confederates who responded favorably to the Association's appeal were Commodore Hunter and Mrs. Braxton Bragg, who contributed many valuable items. Although the Civil War period was stressed in the Association's activities, other phases of Louisiana history were not ignored. In order to make this clear, an official seal was adopted on which important dates in Louisiana history were prominently displayed, and efforts were made to collect items from Louisiana's colonial and ante-bellum past.[11]

Less than two years after its founding, the Louisiana Historical Association took possession of its new quarters. Completed in December, 1890, the building exhibited the very

[10] Manuscript notes on the founding of the Louisiana Historical Association in the Louisiana Historical Association Papers; Frank T. Howard to W. R. Lyman, July 3, 1889, Louisiana Historical Association Papers.

[11] William M. Owen to D. A. Given, September 27, 1890, Louisiana Historical Association Papers; *First Circular and Catalogue of the Louisiana Historical Association.* (New Orleans, 1891), 4-5.

latest in museum eloquence. The architects, Messrs. Sully and Toledano, had designed it so that it would conform in a general way with the Romanesque type of architecture of the Howard Library which adjoined it. The structure consisted of one story and a basement surrounded by a high terrace. Its outer walls were of pressed brick, ornamented with richly carved, semi-glazed terracotta trimmings; while the retaining wall and steps were of Long Meadow brown stone. The interior was finished in highly-polished cypress. Handsome display cases lined the walls in the main hall, which was equipped to serve as a meeting place as well as a museum. A large, fireproof vault in the basement provided adequate storage space for valuable manuscripts.[12]

The Louisiana Historical Association expressed its great satisfaction with its new quarters by planning a memorable celebration for the day of the formal dedication of the building. January 8, 1891, the seventy-sixth anniversary of the Battle of New Orleans, was the date chosen for the ceremony. Numerous invitations were sent out and many business houses adorned their buildings with flags and declared a holiday in honor of the occasion. Despite a "continuous and penetrating rain" on the afternoon of the eighth, many Confederate veterans and local military units participated in a grand parade preceding the dedication of the new building. The procession dispersed in front of the quarters of the Association and the veterans entered the building to the inspiring notes of the "Bonnie Blue Flag," played by the Washington Artillery band.

After the customary preliminary ceremonies, Frank T. Howard, President of the Louisiana Historical Association and donor of the building, made a brief address and formally transferred the museum to the Board of Governors for the perpetual use of the Association. Colonel William Preston Johnston accepted the gift on behalf of the Board. After a stirring address by Judge C. E. Fenner, the dedication cere-

[12] Frank T. Howard and D. A. Given to "the President and Members of the Benevolent Association, Army of Tennessee, Louisiana Division," November 10, 1890, copy in the Louisiana Historical Association Papers; New Orleans *Times-Democrat*, January 9, 1891.

monies were concluded. The Historical Association's museum was given the name "Memorial Hall," in compliance with Howard's wish that the building and its collection might forever proclaim "how a brave people and their descendants hold the name and the fame of their heroes and martyrs with admiration undiminished by disaster or defeat and with a love unquenched by time."[13]

Possession of Memorial Hall encouraged the Association to seek even greater accomplishments than those already achieved. Through the untiring interest of President Howard and other members of the Board of Governors, the organization made notable progress. The general membership increased steadily and the illustrious name of Charles Gayarré, famed Louisiana historian, was added to the list of honorary members. In August, 1891, the Association issued its first publication, entitled: *First Circular and Catalogue of the Louisiana Historical Association.* Thanks to the continued efforts of Colonel William Miller Owen, Second Vice President and Custodian of Memorial Hall, the Executive Committee was able to report that the Association's collection contained "over 4,000 valuable manuscripts, books and papers . . . besides portraits of distinguished men, arms, uniforms, regimental flags, etc." In the words of the *First Circular,* the results of the Association's activities were "highly encouraging."[14]

Shortly after its dedication, Memorial Hall became the scene of a most solemn occasion, which made it a place of considerable historic interest in its own right. On December 6, 1889, Jefferson Davis, only President of the Confederate States of America, died in New Orleans. Following an impressive funeral pageant, the dead chieftain's body had been given temporary burial in the Army of Northern Virginia's tomb in Metairie Cemetery. After three-and-a-half-years, the

[13] New Orleans *Times-Democrat,* January 9, 1891; Frank T. Howard to the Board of Governors of the Louisiana Historical Association, January 8, 1891, copy in the Louisiana Historical Association Papers.

[14] Charles Gayarré to D. A. Given, May 14, 1891, Louisiana Historical Association Papers; *First Circular and Catalogue of the Louisiana Historical Association,* 3-5.

President's widow decided that Mr. Davis' remains should be permanently laid to rest in Richmond, Virginia. In accordance with her wishes, the copper casket containing the President's body was removed from its vault in the tomb of the Army of Northern Virginia on May 27, 1893. The casket was then placed in a brass-trimmed oak coffin and transported under military escort to Memorial Hall, where it lay in state until the next evening, when it was removed to the Louisville and Nashville Railroad depot for its final trip to Richmond. The short period when the Confederate President's body lay in state in the Louisiana Historical Association's museum is of such interest that fuller treatment should be given to this brief event in the Association's history.[15]

The hearse bearing the President's remains arrived at Memorial Hall late in the afternoon of Saturday, May 27th. Amid a "stifling" silence broken only by the slow rolling of thunder in the west, the casket was carried into "the relic-hung hall" and placed on a simple, antique oak bier at the upper end of the long room. Here, beneath tattered battle flags and amid thousands of relics of the people whom he had guided in their ill-fated war for independence, the Confederate leader's body spent its last few hours in New Orleans. Covered only with the faded Mexican War flag of the First Mississippi Rifles which he had commanded long before the Civil War, and guarded by survivors of the vast armies which once had marched under his command, Jefferson Davis' casket lay in state. During the evening of the twenty-seventh and late into the afternoon of the twenty-eighth, a steady stream of people filed silently into Memorial Hall in order to pay their last respects to the departed Southern leader. Finally, as evening shadows began to appear in Camp Street, immense crowds formed outside the Hall, while a distinguished gathering assembled within. On the platform sat Governor Murphy J. Foster of Louisiana, his lieutenant governor, the mayor of Richmond, and Miss "Winnie" Davis and other relatives of the late President. At the appointed

[15] Edison H. Thomas, *Story of the Jefferson Davis Funeral Train* (reprinted from the *L.&N. Magazine*, February, 1955), 3-5.

time, the Governor arose and spoke briefly of the solemnity of the events which were taking place. Then letters were read authorizing the transfer of the President's remains from New Orleans to Richmond. After a fervent prayer delivered by the Rev. A. Gordon Bakewell, "an impromptu body of pall-bearers, from among the veterans in the crowd," formed, carried the casket out of the Hall, and placed it upon a crepe draped catafalque drawn by four black horses. While bands played mournful music, the funeral procession moved slowly up Camp Street and Jefferson Davis' remains were carried out of sight of the Louisiana Historial Association's museum.[16]

At the annual election of officers in 1893, Frank T. Howard, first President and patron of the Louisiana Historical Association, retired from office. He was succeeded by Lieutenant Colonel Edward A. Palfrey, a noted Confederate veteran. It was during Colonel Palfrey's presidency that the future development of the Association's museum was seriously threatened by the collecting activities of several other museums throughout the South, and particularly by the formation of the Confederate Memorial Association which had been organized in the mid-1890's in order to raise funds for the erection of a "National Confederate museum" or "Battle Abbey" in Richmond, Virginia. To meet this challenge, the Louisiana Historical Association was fortunate in having as a member Colonel Joseph A. Chalaron, a man of tireless energy. As Chairman of the Association's Archives Committee, Colonel Chalaron, early in 1897, exhorted the Association "to be up and moving; to act now, if we wish to hold in its entirety what we have already accumulated, and carry our Museum to what its Projectors aimed to have it—unsurpassed by any in the South." Warning that relics and historical records still in private hands would "go where most energy is shown," he urged that the favorable sentiment aroused by the Battle Abbey movement not be overlooked or disparaged; but that it be taken advantage of and directed as much as possible to the benefit of the Louisiana Historical Association. Accordingly, he advocated that the Association approach its

[16] New Orleans *Times-Democrat*, May 27, 28, 29, 1893.

activities in a more "thoughtful, earnest, and businesslike way" than it had in the past; and that it employ systematic solicitation as a means of enlarging its collection.[17]

In response to Chalaron's appeal for renewed vigor, the Association took immediate steps to strengthen its position. Until this time, the activities of the organization had been financed chiefly by annual contributions from the Confederate veterans' organizations which met in Memorial Hall. It was evident that this method of financing was inadequate and that new sources of revenue had to be developed in order to increase the effectiveness of the Association. Thus a movement was begun with the object of raising an endowment fund for the maintenance of the museum. In an effort to enlist public support, the work of the Louisiana Historical Association was featured in a full page spread in the "Confederate Veteran Edition" of the *Daily States* of June 18, 1897. Although this publicity made the Association better known, it produced relatively little in the line of voluntary contributions.

In hopes of providing a steady source of income, the Board of Governors decided to appeal for state support of the Association's museum. Accordingly, plans were made to enlist the aid of the Louisiana Constitutional Convention which was scheduled to meet in New Orleans in 1898; and a committee was formed to contact the convention delegates and induce them to draft and adopt a provision in the new constitution for the support of Memorial Hall. In order to meet a pressing need for additional space in the museum, the Association's patron, Frank T. Howard, enlarged Memorial Hall by adding an attractive gallery running the full length of the building. This fire-proof annex, equipped with specially constructed steel and glass museum cases, provided ample room for the rapidly increasing collection.[18]

[17] *Act of Incorporation and By-Laws of the Louisiana Historical Association*, 2; *Confederate Veteran*, VI (December, 1898), 547; Minutes of the Louisiana Historical Association, II, 3-8, 89, in the Louisiana Historical Association Papers.

[18] New Orleans *Daily States*, June 18, 1897; Minutes of the Louisiana Historical Association, II, 26; *Confederate Veteran*, VI (December, 1898), 547.

The enthusiasm displayed by Colonel Joseph A. Chalaron in all movements for the improvement of the Association and its museum so impressed the Board of Governors that, at their annual meeting in March, 1898, they elected him Secretary and Treasurer of the Association and Custodian of Memorial Hall. Chalaron made every effort to justify the trust placed in him. Combining a considerable amount of natural ability with a tremendous capacity for work, he made the years subsequent to his election some of the brightest in the history of the Louisiana Historical Association. A great aid to Chalaron in his valuable work was Louisiana's new constitution, adopted in May, 1898, which provided that "The General Assembly shall appropriate not less than twelve hundred dollars per annum for the maintenance in New Orleans of a Memorial Hall or repository for the collection and preservation of relics and mementoes of the late Civil War, and of other objects of interest." With this guaranteed annual income at his disposal, Chalaron was able to devote his undivided attention to the activities of the Association.[19]

Working closely with President Palfrey, Colonel Chalaron improved the museum collection. Long lists attest to the many historical items which came into the Association's possession when he was Custodian. Especially noteworthy were large additions to the Davis Collection, which made the Louisiana Historical Association's collection of such items far superior to any other in existence. Another acqusition of considerable interest was the "Lady Slocomb," an eight inch Columbiad used by the Fifth Company Washington Artillery during the defense of the Confederate fortifications at Mobile, which was placed in front of Memorial Hall during the summer of 1899. This large gun attracted much attention and proved quite helpful in drawing increased crowds into the Hall.[20]

The turn of the century found the Louisiana Historical

[19] Minutes of the Louisiana Historical Association, II, 30, 46; Benjamin W. Dart, *Constitutions of the State of Louisiana and Selected Federal Laws* (Indianapolis, 1932), 655.

[20] Custodian's Report, July 5, 1899, copy in the Louisiana Historical Association Papers; Minutes of the Louisiana Historical Association, II, 61-62, 72.

Association's museum at its height. Its historical collection had reached such proportions that it was estimated to contain over 8,000 articles. Through Colonel Chalaron's efforts, the exhibits were kept in splendid shape; and an average of better than 10,000 visitors viewed them annually. In addition to Confederate veterans' organizations, local units of the Sons and Daughters of the Confederacy met regularly in Memorial Hall and aided in maintaining public interest in the collection.

The Louisiana Historical Association's museum proved such an outstanding success during this period that it completely dominated the imagination of the officers; and, as a result, other important aspects of the organization's work were largely ignored. This was especially true of the general membership, which had been neglected for some years. By the end of President Palfrey's administration in 1901, "a marked decrease" in the roll of members was very much in evidence. The matter caused some concern at the time, but mainly because the museum's revenue from this source had decreased. When other means were found for replacing this lost source of income, no serious attempt was made to revive the declining membership, and, in a short time, the rolls of the Association dwindled to the twenty-five members of the Board of Governors.[21]

On the death of Colonel Palfrey in 1901, another prominent Confederate veteran, Captain George A. Williams, succeeded to the presidency of the Louisiana Historical Association. During Williams' eight-year administration, the museum continued to prosper and the large annual flow of visitors through Memorial Hall occasionally exceeded 20,000 persons. In 1909 President Williams retired from office and was succeeded by Colonel Benjamin F. Eshleman, famed Civil War commander of the Washington Artillery. A few months after his election Colonel Eshleman died and within days the Association suffered another serious loss in the death

[21] *Confederate Memorial Hall of the Louisiana Historical Association* (n.p., n.d.), 5; Minutes of the Louisiana Historical Association, II, 72-73, 79, 83-84, 95, 104.

of its dynamic Secretary and Treasurer, Colonel Joseph A. Chalaron.

At the next annual meeting, held in March, 1910, Lewis Guion was elected President. Early in his administration President Guion entertained hopes of improving the facilities of the Association by adding a story to Memorial Hall. He proposed to accomplish this by making a further appeal to the generosity of the Association's patron, Frank T. Howard; but Mr. Howard's untimely death in 1911 ended any hopes which Guion had in this regard. In making his will, however, Mr. Howard had not forgotten the Association; and thus the treasury received $5,000 from his estate to be used for the improvement of Memorial Hall. Since this sum was inadequate for enlarging the building, it was invested in 5% City of New Orleans Public Improvement Bonds, the interest of which was to be used by the Association.[22]

The deaths of Chalaron and Howard mark the close of the Louisiana Historical Association's brilliant first years. From this period until the mid-Twentieth Century the story of the Association is one of gradual decline. At first this decline was imperceptible and a succession of prominent citizens to the presidency tended to distract attention from the obvious fact that the Association was ceasing to progress.[23] Despite the fact that the museum collection in Memorial Hall continued to be kept in good condition, a study of the minute book covering the early twenties indicates lack of progressive thinking on the part of the Board of Governors and a considerable number of Board meetings which had to be postponed because of lack of quorum. Neglect of the general membership had restricted the members of the Louisiana Historical

[22] *Ibid.*, II, 79, 81, 165, 185, 189, 191; III, 16, 33, 63, 66, 68, 70, 74.

[23] Lewis Guion retired from office in 1914 and was succeeded by George A. Williams, who retired in 1915. The next President was Captain E. M. Hudson, formerly of the Confederate Diplomatic Corps. Hudson died in 1916 and was succeeded by Joseph A. Breaux, Ex-Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Louisiana, who served until his death in 1926. His successor was Major General William J. Behan, former Mayor of New Orleans, who died in 1928, whereupon Dr. E. S. Lewis became President. Dr. Lewis held the office until his death in 1935. (Minutes of the Louisiana Historical Association, III, 124, 156, 190, 198, 200; IV, 98, 150, 152, 161-162.)

Association mainly to a relatively small number of Confederate veterans. While these men were active, little need had been felt for enlarging the rolls of the organization, but now, as they became infirm with age, there was no younger membership to take up their work.[24]

As the years progressed the Board became increasingly conscious of "the inevitable early end" of the Louisiana Historical Association as a body of Confederate veterans; and much thought was given to the future of the Association's valuable museum and archives. By the late twenties the Howard Memorial Library's holdings had grown to such proportions that there was dire need for additional space in which to expand the library facilities; and members of the board of that institution, viewing Memorial Hall as an easy answer to their problem, began to cast doubt upon the legality of the Historical Association's title to the building. The matter dragged on for several years; but early in 1931, efforts were made to induce the Louisiana Historical Association to vacate Memorial Hall and move its collection into the quarters of the Upper Pontalba Cultural Museum Committee on Jackson Square. When this failed, and representatives of the Howard Memorial Library intimated that the Association might be forced to vacate the premises, Captain James Dinkins, an elderly Confederate veteran on the Board of Governors, vowed that he would fight the move "as long as there was animation in his body" and promised to use "every particle of force or influence which he possessed to oppose such an action." The irate captain then enlisted the aid of Governor Huey P. Long. Within days the Governor appointed Richard W. Leche as his special representative in the matter. Leche soon succeeded in working out a compromise, whereby the Louisiana Historical Association granted use of the basement of Memorial Hall to the Howard Library, in return for a promise that the Association would not be disturbed in its use of the remainder of the building. The speedy action of Leche restored calm and the Association soon returned to

[24] Minutes of the Louisiana Historical Association, IV, 42 ff.

that state of complacent inertia which had come to characterize it.[25]

In 1936 Major General Allison Owen, son of Colonel William Miller Owen and former commanding officer of the Washington Artillery, was elected President. During his administration the few remaining Confederate veterans in the Association passed away; and the Board of Governors dwindled to fifteen members, representing the Association of the Army of Tennessee, the Battalion of Washington Artillery, and the trustees of the Howard Memorial Library Association—those three of the original five organizations which had made provision for a self perpetuating membership. Although the Louisiana Historical Association was now but a sad remembrance of its former self, it was largely through the efforts of General Owen that the organization was able to survive at all. This state of affairs continued for several years. The annual appropriation from the State of Louisiana made it possible to manage Memorial Hall with a reasonable degree of efficiency, but little could be done to improve the exhibits or modernize the facilities. General Owen entertained hopes of improving the situation, but numerous other commitments and lack of enthusiasm on the part of the Board frustrated most of his efforts.[26]

General Owen died in January, 1951.[27] Shortly before his death, attempts were made to bring new life into the Association by enlarging the Board of Governors to include representatives of the Sons and Daughters of the Confederacy. These efforts came to naught, however, when those charged with the responsibility of amending the Association's Charter to include this change failed to fulfill the duty assigned to them. Affairs dragged on in an unsettled state until December, 1956, when the author of this article was elected Presi-

[25] *Ibid.*, IV, 161, 174-179, 181, 185.

[26] *Ibid.*, IV, 192-193, 195, 197, 208, 211.

[27] Owen was succeeded in the presidency by Colonel Henry B. Curtis, who held office from March, 1951, until October, 1952. The next President was Edward A. Fowler, who resigned in December, 1956. (Minutes of the Louisiana Historical Association, March 26, 1951, October 6, 1952, December 19, 1956.)

dent and resolved to rejuvenate the Association and modernize the museum.

While steps were being taken to accomplish these objectives, he was appraised of the fact that Edwin A. Davis, Head of the History Department of Louisiana State University, had called a meeting of professional historians and other interested persons to organize a new, active, state-wide historical society. This meeting was scheduled to assemble at Louisiana College in Pineville on March 29, 1958. Feeling that here was a splendid opportunity for assuring the future of the Louisiana Historical Association, the writer phoned Davis and suggested that a new society might not be necessary, if those attending his proposed meeting would agree to join the Louisiana Historical Association; reorganize it; and make it a really active and worthwhile historical society for the entire state. Davis expressed great interest in this suggestion and invited the author to repeat it at the Pineville meeting. This was done, with the result that those present at this meeting accepted his invitation to join the Louisiana Historical Association; and soon the names of over thirty-five new members were added to the rolls of the organization.[28]

Steps were immediately taken to completely revise the antiquated charter of the Association. On June 6, 1958, a general meeting of the organization was held at Memorial Hall and appropriate amendments to the charter were adopted. By this act the Louisiana Historical Association was reorganized and a new slate of officers took command. Edwin A. Davis became President; Kenneth Trist Urquhart, Vice-President; and John C. L. Andreassen, Secretary and Treasurer.

The first activity of the newly reorganized Historical Association was to inaugurate an intensive campaign to enlist new members throughout the entire state. To this end, a booklet, entitled: *An Invitation to Join the Louisiana His-*

[28] Allison Owen to Edward A. Fowler, August 21, December 12, 1950, in the Louisiana Historical Association Papers; Minutes of the Louisiana Historical Association, May 21, September 17, 1951, December 19, 1956; "Minutes of Meeting for Organization of Louisiana Historical Association," March 29, 1958; *An Invitation to Join the Louisiana Historical Association* (New Orleans, 1958), 5-6.

torical Association, was published in July, 1958. This publication was distributed freely to prospective members throughout the state and soon a steady stream of applications began to arrive in the office of the Secretary. To date the activities of the reorganized group have proved highly successful. With the great interest and enthusiasm that is being displayed by the officers and members, there seems little doubt that the Louisiana Historical Association can look forward to a bright and active future.[29]

[29] *An Invitation to Join the Louisiana Historical Association* (New Orleans, 1958), 6-7, 23-25.

Illustrations

Fig. 1—Memorial Hall, Museum of the Louisiana Historical Association in New Orleans, Louisiana.

Fig. 2—Frank T. Howard
Patron and First President of the Louisiana
Historical Association.

Fig. 3—Placing the "Lady Slocomb" in Front of Memorial Hall in 1899.

LOUISIANA
Boundary of French Louisiana, 1941
Traditional Limits of French Ovens
French Ovens Reported - 1950
Slidell
New Orleans
Houma
Cut Off
Abbeville
GULF
OF
MEXICO
10 0 10 20 30 40 50
scale - miles

Fig. 4—Map.

Fig. 5—French Oven, Cut Off, Louisiana (1950).

Fig. 6—Italian Oven, Independence, Louisiana (1950).

Fig. 7—Spanish Oven, Michoacan, Mexico (1947)
(Courtesy R. C. West).

Fig. 8—French Oven, Quebec (ca. 1908). Note framework of roof covering, also pans, wooden hoe, and paddle. (Reproduced by permission of Keystone View Co.).

Fig. 9—Oven in Roman Gaul. (Reproduced from W. M. West's *The Story of Modern Progress*, 27, by permission of Allyn and Bacon, Inc.).

Fig. 10—French Oven at Fort Caroline, Florida (1562-1565). Compare Figure 7 with Figures 5 and 8, French ovens of Quebec and Louisiana, respectively. (Reproduced from LeMoyne's picture by permission of The Clements Library, University of Michigan).

Fig. 11—French Oven, Slidell, Louisiana (1950).

Fig. 12—Hungarian oven, Albany, Louisiana (1950).

The Outdoor Oven in Louisiana *

By FRED KNIFFEN

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Introduction

THE OUTDOOR OVEN is one element in the material complex that characterizes parts of rural south Louisiana. Since this country oven (*four de campagne*) appears doomed to early extinction, it was judged timely to observe it fully while the tradition of its building and use is still faintly alive. There seemed a possibility that knowledge of the oven might throw some light on two important questions regarding the cultural composition and culture history of French Louisiana: In what degree is the area culturally uniform? To what extent is the culture really French rather than a New World borrowing or innovation?

French Louisiana is usually distinguished from Anglo-Saxon Louisiana on the basis of language or religion (Fig. 4). It is commonly taken for granted that the area so delimited is uniform in other cultural respects; the evidence suggests that there are fundamental cleavages. Secondly, it has been found unsafe to assume that material traits characteristic of French Louisiana necessarily originated in France. For example, the *tarabi*, a device used to spin both horsehair

* Incidental to larger objectives, a general cultural survey of the state financed by the office of Naval Research provided information concerning the distribution of the outdoor oven. A questionnaire circulated among its agents by the Agricultural Extension Service contributed to the same end. The assistance of these agencies and of numerous individuals is gratefully acknowledged.

and Spanish moss, was discovered to be of Spanish origin and to center in distribution on western or prairie French Louisiana.[1] The practice of thatching houses with the native palmetto, once common in south Louisiana, is most certainly a borrowing from the local Indians.

Fireplace and Outdoor Oven

In addition to people of French descent, south Louisiana has considerable groups of Italians, Mexicans, and Hungarians, and lesser numbers of other national origin, all of whom have the outdoor oven as part of their cultural heritage. This fact introduces moderate complications. On the other hand, it was possible to eliminate Anglo-Saxon Louisiana from consideration early in the study since every report from northern parishes unequivocally denied any knowledge of an outdoor oven (Fig. 4).

The outdoor oven extends in time back to the Old World Paleolithic. Several centuries before Christ every courtyard in Chaldeae had its oven for baking the family bread.[2] From the Near East the oven spread over most of Europe. However, it has never been prominent in the continent's northwestern periphery and is hardly known in north Scandinavia and Ireland. Here oat bread baked on flat pans or stones remains dominant.[3]

Clay was the older material of oven construction; stone and brick are younger. The ground plan ranges from round, through oval, to rectangular; walls and top are domed or arched. While there is marked areal segregation of the several forms, there is also some coincidence of round and rectangular ovens. It is noteworthy that except for southern Sweden the round oven generally stands alone;[4] the corollary seems generally true, that rectangular ovens are built in some manner into the house.

[1] Fred Kniffen, "A Spanish Spinner in Louisiana," *Southern Folklore Quarterly*, XIII (Dec., 1949), 192-199, *passim*.

[2] *Encyclopedia Britannica* (14th ed., New York, 1929), IV, 63.

[3] Sigurd Erixon, "West European Connections and Culture Relations," *Folk-Liv*, II (1938), 153.

[4] Sigurd Erixon, "Ofen mit Rundem Grundriss," *Folk-Liv*, III (1939), 265.

In Anglo-America the outdoor oven has been restricted largely to compact non-British groups,[5] among them Spanish, Italian, French, German, Hungarian, and certainly others. Early Anglo-American baking involved the fireplace, a medieval and subsequent development of central western Europe.[6] The gable-end fireplace was thoroughly in the tradidition of the British migrants to America,[7] though the external protuberance of both hearth and chimney appears to be a New World colonial development.

Anglo-American bread baking was a function of the hearth,[8] be it rectangular oven built next the fireplace or, more commonly, some other device utilizing the open fire. There was the so-called tin or Dutch kitchen (confusingly called Dutch oven), a movable container of variable form with open side facing the fireplace, a device akin to the reflector baker familiar to campers. There was also the true Dutch oven or bake kettle, a cast-iron pot with rimmed lid of the same material. There were sundry simple methods, such as propping a board containing light-bread dough before the open fire.[9]

[5] However, the oven was known in early colonial days in Anglo-American settlements, as attested by the restored family-size fire-clay oven in the Jamestown Museum [Worth Bailey, "A Jamestown Baking Oven of the Seventeenth Century," *William and Mary College Quarterly Historical Magazine* (2nd series), XVII (Oct., 1937), 497] and by Sidney King's conjectural painting of James Fort. The painting shows an oven outside the palisaded walls. The oven is known for New England and Maritime Canada, in the former well into the 19th century ["A Canadian Bakery," *National Geographic Magazine*, XIX (March, 1908), 173] and to the present in the latter. Propinquity would suggest a French Canadian origin for these ovens. However, Eric Sloane says that outdoor ovens in New England are comparatively recent and might well have come from "Dutch" Pennsylvania along with barns and other outbuildings.

[6] Sigurd Erixon, "West European Connections and Culture Relations," 166.

[7] E. E. Evans, *Irish Heritage* (Dundalk, Northern Ireland, 1943), 56, 59, 64.

[8] Walter Hough, *Fire as an Agent in Human Culture* (Smithsonian Institute, Bulletin 139. Washington, 1926), 40, refers to a bake house separate from the dwelling. Its range of distribution and ethnic association are not given.

[9] Carl W. Drepperd, *Pioneer America* (Garden City, 1948), 25-36; Hezekiah Butterworth, *In Old New England; the Romance of a Colonial Fireside* (New York, 1895), *passim*; Leo A. Borah, "Connecticut, Prodigy of Ingenuity," *National Geographic Magazine*, LXII (Sept., 1938), 279-325; Horace Kephart, *Our Southern Highlanders* (New York, 1913), *passim*; Lucy Lacrom, "How Dear to My Heart," in Barrows Mussey (ed.), *Yankee Life by Those Who Lived It* (New York, 1947), 40-46; Vance Randolph, *The Ozarks; An American Survival of Primitive Society* (New York, 1931), 26-27; Benjamin Butterworth, "The Growth of Industrial Art," *House Miscellaneous Documents* No. 121, 52 Cong., 2 sess., 105.

The whole complex of Anglo-American bread making was truly differentiated from any European antecedents when it added corn bread, moderately in the North and, almost to the exclusion of others, in parts of the South where wheat could not be raised nor wheat flour readily obtained. The outdoor oven, on the other hand, seems nowhere in the New World to have had other than a primary association with wheat bread. This affinity holds not only for French Canada, but also for Mexico and the Pueblo Indians of the American Southwest. In Mexico and the Southwest, European oven and wheat bread had to overcome a native prejudice in order to be accepted along with aboriginal maize foods.

The use of the outdoor oven for baking wheat bread follows an unbroken sequence from 16th-century France to 20th-century south Louisiana. Wheat was a major import from France to the 18th-century Louisiana settlements; it was one of the earliest and steadiest from the Illinois country. In 1818, William Darby pointed out that while wheat might be cultivated in Louisiana, flour was so readily imported that it was more profitable to raise crops bringing greater returns.[10] Wrong as Darby was about the possibility of growing wheat in Louisiana,[11] imported flour was abundant and cheap.

The French Oven

The form of the French oven seems likewise to have maintained a common heritage from oldest to most recent times. The oven, common to Canada and Louisiana and apparently represented in modern France, may be described as oval or pear shaped in ground plan and arched or domed above (Fig. 5). This particularly describes the oven of earth construction. Ovens of brick or stone, sparingly represented in French portions of the New World, tend to be rectangular in exterior ground plan and arched above (Fig. 12). Despite such variants there is a readily distinguishable form difference as among the various ethnic groups. Distinction be-

[10] William Darby, *The Emigrant's Guide* (New York, 1818), 11.

[11] Louisiana's agricultural history is replete with attempts to raise wheat. A combination of heat, humidity, and mildew has been an apparently insurmountable barrier to continuous commercial production.

tween oval French (Fig. 5) and beehive-shaped Italian (Fig. 6) ovens in Louisiana is obvious, and neither would be confused with the dome-form oven of Spanish America (Fig. 7).

While the ovens employed today in France are apparently related to the Louisiana and Quebec French ovens, the latter two are certainly of a more primitive type. In addition, the two New World French ovens are seemingly identical, not only in form, but also in the common employment of a wooden covering (Figs. 5, 8, 11) and in the nature of the special implements involved in their use (Fig. 8). The close genetic relationship of the American French ovens of today with the oven of France is demonstrated beyond doubt by a fortunately preserved drawing of an oven of Roman Gaul (Fig. 9) and by a sketch of the Hugenot settlement of Fort Caroline, Florida, 1562-1565. In every comparable respect the oven shown at Fort Caroline (Fig. 10) is similar to one in use in Louisiana in 1953 (Fig. 11). Apparently the Louisiana and Quebec ovens have changed little since their introduction from France some two and a half centuries ago.

Building the Oven

The building of the French oven in Louisiana reveals clever adaptation to available materials. In a land where native stone is non-existent and brick often scarce and expensive, local clays and Spanish moss are joined in effective combination to construct ovens capable of intensive use for ten to fifteen years. Following is a description of the building of French ovens in Louisiana, a composite of several accounts, related in the present tense, though actually the art is little practiced at present.

Some ovens are set directly on the ground, but most are constructed on wooden platforms standing some two to three feet high, supported by four heavy wooden posts (Figs. 5, 11). The plank floor is rimmed about the edge, then covered with several inches of compact earth. A form is built on the platform, consisting generally of a half (split lengthwise)

or whole barrel placed on its side and braced internally to support a heavy load. If a whole barrel is used, small boards are leaned against the sides to extend the maximum diameter down to the platform. If no barrel is available, dry poles of the proper length are piled in a manner to simulate one. The form is completed by adding a bowed iron strap over the front to outline the door and a tin can or cup at the rear to preserve a smoke-hole opening.

The preparation of the building material involves the immersion of loose, thick ropes composed of crudely carded strands of cured Spanish moss in a stiff clay-water mixture. When judged to be of proper consistency, the stringy mud is plastered over the form to a thickness of some six inches. After the clay dries for two or three days, the internal wooden form is ignited and encouraged to a roaring blaze that continues for the better part of a day. The fitting of a wooden door to the opening left for the purpose completes the construction of the oven. Most ovens are covered, generally with a shed type wooden roof, the primary purpose of which is to preserve the clay structure from damage by torrential rains.

While the practices described above are most common, the same general result is attained by some variation in method. If brick are available, they may form the base of the oven, overlying the earth-mantled planks of the platform. The form over which the oven is to be built may consist of a carefully molded heap of earth; this mode of construction necessitates a broad board to preserve a straight front where the door is to be and a brick inserted into the rear of the pile to insure a smoke hole. Brick are sometimes used to build the oven over the mold thus constructed, though there are those who insist that clay ovens last longer.

The earth mold is most commonly covered with the clay-moss mixture previously described. Making the plaster has developed into a near art, where experienced judgment is necessary to determine the proper proportions of moss, clay, and water to be mixed with hoe and bare feet in pit or tub. An extra expenditure of labor is involved in accumulating earth for the mold and in scraping it out of the completed

clay or brick shell. However, the smoother inside finish is considered sufficient recompense over the "lazy-man's" method of building over a barrel.

Baking

Irrespective of method and materials, the finished ovens vary little in form, though they do differ considerably in size, with capacity ranging from three or four loaves to ten or even more. The actual use of the ovens in baking bread seems everywhere in Louisiana to follow the same procedure. The oven is heated with any "non-fat" wood for fifteen or twenty minutes, during which both door and smoke hole are left open. Then fire and ashes are raked out with a large-bladed wooden hoe made especially for the purpose (Fig. 8).

The temperature of the oven is ascertained by tossing in a pinch of wheat flour or a piece of paper. If flour or paper brown, but do not burn, the temperature is deemed right for baking. If too hot, as indicated by the burning of flour or paper, a wet mop is swished around inside the oven until further testing indicates a proper temperature. Then the smoke hole is plugged with damp rags and the dome-shaped or rectangular loaves of yeast dough are placed directly or in greased black pans on the oven floor by means of a thin-bladed cypress paddle at least five feet long (Fig. 8). Next, the wooden door, backed by a damp rag or sack, is set into place. After a period of from a half hour to an hour and a half the baked loaves (now *pain chaud*) are removed with the paddle and the oven is permitted to cool against another baking day.

Distribution of the Oven in French Louisiana

With respect to this one item, the oven yields an affirmative answer to the question posed in the first paragraph regarding the French origin of Louisiana French culture. That is, the Louisiana oven is unquestionably derived from the oven of France. The question as to the uniformity of Louisiana French culture is quite a different matter. Examination of the map (Fig. 4) reveals immediately that the area

commonly considered French Louisiana does not agree with the distribution of the French oven in the state. At the east the two coincide approximately; at the west the oven stops short of the prairies, still very much part of French Louisiana.

This cultural difference was difficult to account for, since the French population of the prairies came from the eastern section of Louisiana and the migration took place while primitive methods of cooking prevailed. Further, the cleavage is not clearly one between long-established groups such as Creole and Acadian. The answer emerged only when a striking distinction in food habits as between eastern and western Louisiana was examined as to cause and effect.

In eastern French Louisiana, now and in the past, wheat has been the breadstuff almost to the complete exclusion of maize. The pattern is distinctive in the general non-use of hot breads, such as wheat-flour biscuits. In prairie French Louisiana, on the other hand, corn meal is or has been the primary breadstuff. Corn bread appears to be but one element of an alien complex borrowed early in the 19th century from Anglo-American neighbors at the north. Among other elements are the Dutch oven, the exterior clay chimney and fireplace, the log barn, and perhaps the wooden mortar and pestle. The prairie French adopted enthusiastically and even added to the sum of maize dishes.[12]

This divergence of the prairie French from their eastern kinsmen seems to have been conditioned by economics and geography. The western Louisiana French led a largely subsistence existence, forced in part by the expense and difficulty of transporting bulk commodities like wheat flour across the prairie terrain from the distant waterways. They could grow maize but not wheat; in the absence of wheat the oven was abandoned. The acceptance of corn meal and the com-

[12] Possibly among their contributions is *couche-couche*, described by William A. Read, *Louisiana French* (University Studies V, Baton Rouge, 1931), 122, as "corn-meal dough sweetened and fried brown; served with milk or eaten at breakfast with coffee." With minor variations, *couche-couche* reached eastward to the Mississippi at some points, but seems generally not to have been known east of the river, even where isolated French groups adopted corn bread.

plexity of its preparation and cooking was accompanied by the adoption of the Dutch oven from the Anglo-Americans.

Decline of the Oven

Within its area of use, the outdoor oven was once a feature of every household, set generally somewhat removed to the rear of the dwelling. Baking was then a family and not a community affair. Where economic specialization developed, as it did early in urban centers, the family oven disappeared. Descriptions of New Orleans of a century ago make no mention of it.[13] Additionally, the pretentious homes of plantation owners had special provisions for cooking that did not include the outdoor oven. The plantation kitchen of the 1850's, even within French Louisiana, was a separate brick structure containing a great open fireplace equipped with spits, drip pans, and Dutch ovens.[14] Thus a century ago the French outdoor oven was primarily an attribute of the *petit habitant*, living in solid rural groups at points readily served by water transportation bringing imported flour.[15] The rural rather than urban association is implicit in the name, country oven or *four (de) campagne*.[16]

Despite the inroads made by professional bakeries, good roads, and inside stoves equipped with ovens, the outdoor French oven was fairly common until World War II. While war-time conditions did not in themselves necessarily contribute to the demise of the *petit four*,[17] or small family oven, the event certainly accelerated technical changes that were incipient or underway and is a convenient dating point for

[13] Lyle Saxon, *Fabulous New Orleans* (New York, 1928), *passim*.

[14] Beryl Dyson Hatfield, "Fish Cookery in South Louisiana," (unpublished Master's thesis, Louisiana State University, Baton Rouge, 1933), 14.

[15] Even within the general area of its use, the oven seems to have been restricted to the sedentary farmer and not employed by the semi-nomadic swamp and marsh hunter and fisherman.

[16] Though quite naturally referred to as simply *fourneau* or some similar name by its country-dwelling users.

[17] *Petit* is appropriate only as the family oven is contrasted to the much larger commercial oven. By the users the family oven might be referred to as *grand four*, as it certainly was in comparison with smaller interior baking devices.

the rapid decline of the oven. In 1959 there is no certain instance of a French oven regularly in use.[18]

Conservatism in French Louisiana as expressed by the retention of the oven seems to be a product of compact, similar-thinking groups living in comparative isolation. The isolation is largely physical, related to transportation and proximity to urban centers, but in one instance it is social. Here old Louisiana French folkways and language are preserved by a group removed from surrounding peoples by reason of Negro blood.

Strangely, the Italian oven, introduced by Sicilians and south Italians arriving in numbers at the close of the 19th century, exhibits greater survival value then the French oven, although showing the same general distribution. The Italian oven was abundant even in metropolitan New Orleans as late as the 1930's and remains fairly widespread in the 1950's, sometimes in communities where individuals of Italian origin or descent are relatively few. Recency of migration is likely among the factors accounting for the survival. The same remarks apply in a general way to a rural colony of Hungarians.

Summary and Conclusions

The south Louisiana French oven is a primitive form of the oven of France and is fundamentally the same as the Quebec oven.

In Louisiana the oven was restricted to the eastern portion of the French section of the state, where wheat flour was always readily available.

The prairie French adopted the corn-bread complex of Anglo-America. Although wheat as a breadstuff has been

[18] To show how short-lived memory is, emphatic denial of knowledge of the oven was encountered where it was certainly present fifteen years ago. Students concerned with things preserved only by oral tradition are familiar with an age grading of memory whereby the older people remember a trait now gone, whereas the younger ones do not remember it but many deny that it ever existed. As the older people die, the memory of the trait may be gone. This process of group forgetting frequently makes it difficult to reconstruct the original distribution of a fading practice that leaves neither material remains nor documentary record.

widely re-established within the last half-century, it has utilized the modern iron range rather than the outdoor oven.

Cultural conservatism, as illustrated by the retention of the oven, appears to be a product of compact groups of *petits habitants* living in physical or social isolation.

Finally, the distribution of the oven in Louisiana is such as to confirm a cultural cleavage between eastern and prairie French, suggested in a previous study by the distribution of the *tarabi* spinner.

*The Foreign Slave Trade in Louisiana After 1808**

By JOE G. TAYLOR

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An account of illegal or conspiratorial activities is a great temptation to the historian. American history affords many examples—the Spanish Conspiracy, the Burr Conspiracy, and Murrell's alleged plan for a slave uprising along the Mississippi, to name a few. Because conspirators and outlaws do not ordinarily leave documents giving their plans and detailing their activities, the historian must reach his conclusions from rather slender strands of evidence; in the absence of extensive documentation, there is little to restrain his imagination. Two men can reach radically different conclusions from the same bits of evidence.

Slave smuggling is no exception. Probably the lowest estimate of the extent of American slave smuggling was that of William Lowndes Yancey, who asserted that not more than 500 Negroes had been smuggled into the United States after 1808.[1] W. E. B. Dubois, on the other hand, estimated that 270,000 Negroes were illegally introduced into the United States between 1808 and 1860.[2] This paper does not pretend to referee between Yancey and Dubois, though it is no doubt

* A paper read at the Louisiana Historical Association convention at Alexandria, March 20, 1959.

1 Allan Nevins, *The Emergence of Lincoln*, II (New York, 1950), 35.

2 W. E. Burghardt Dubois, *The Suppression of the African Slave Trade to the United States of America, 1638-1870* (*Harvard Historical Studies*, I. New York, 1904), 112-130.

the historian's prerogative to say that the one estimate is far too low, the other almost certainly too high. Rather this paper will attempt to set forth what is known about the importation and attempted importation of foreign Negroes into the single state of Louisiana after 1808.

One of the first acts of the United States in administering the territory acquired from France by the Louisiana Purchase was a prohibition of the foreign slave trade. The inhabitants of Louisiana believed that this meant their ruin, and expressions of discontent were widespread. An American in the territory at the time stated their case. Cutting off imports of slaves, he said, meant economic disaster. The action would render

> The plantations of little or no value, as Sugar, Cotton, Rice or Indigo cannot be cultivated to any extent, nor raised in large quantities, without employing a number of hands, nor the levee . . . kept in repair: and that the heat of the climate and the marshiness of the country which for the most part is mere swamp is unfriendly to the laboring class of white men.[3]

The prohibition of the foreign slave trade to the Territory of Orleans was not rescinded, and in 1808, at the end of the twenty-year period prescribed by the Constitution, the prohibition became nation-wide. In due time the interstate slave trade provided an adequate supply of Negroes for the Louisiana market but that was in the future. The discontent of the people of Louisiana with the prohibition of the foreign slave trade, combined with normal frontier lawlessness, doubtless encouraged the people of Louisiana to look benevolently upon slave smugglers. Indeed, there are those who maintain that Louisiana is in general inclined to look somewhat benevolently upon defiance of the law,[4] but it is probable that the impossibility of policing the Gulf coast of Louisiana had more bearing on slave smuggling.

[3] Hatch Dent to James H. McCulloch, July 14, 1804: Clarence Edwin Carter, ed., *The Territory of Orleans, 1803-1812* (Clarence Edwin Carter, ed., *The Territorial Papers of the United States*, IX. Washington, 1940), 265-266. See also pp. 261, 263, 285, 305, 315, 320.

[4] Francis Butler Simkins, *A History of the South* (New York, 1956), 320.

In all likelihood the pirates on the Gulf of Mexico below New Orleans always dealt in black gold as well as more ordinary treasures, but early references to slave smuggling identify it with Galveston Island rather than Barataria Bay. The Mexican Revolution of 1808 afforded privateers an opportunity to use Galveston as a base for raids on Spanish shipping and Negroes taken in these raids found their way into Louisiana, some being landed secretly along Bayou Lafourche, others being driven overland to Alexandria. Already a price of one dollar per pound was standard at Galveston.[5] Some trade was more direct; on April 14, 1808, two American ships cleared Havana for New Orleans, carrying ninety-eight Negroes, forty-three of whom had recently arrived in Cuba from Africa.[6]

After 1810 Laffite's pirates, who may have been identical with the privateers of the Mexican Revolution, are noted as the chief source of smuggled Negroes. A German merchant in business in New Orleans stated that in 1813 slaves bought from the pirates for less than $200 sold in the city for $600 or more. That this trade had considerable volume is indicated by the merchant's complaint that the pirate's refusal to accept anything other than specie created a dearth of hard money in New Orleans.[7] Prices advanced with the boom that followed the War of 1812. In 1818 a slave buyer reported that "Fresh imported Guinea negroes were lately sold in NOrleans at $1500."[8]

Perhaps the most original system of smuggling slaves was that practiced by the three Bowie brothers, including the famous Jim Bowie. Shortly after the War of 1812, Jean Laffite transferred his base to Galveston Island, and there the Bowies went to buy Negroes at the standard rate of one dollar per pound. Under the law, when Negroes smuggled into

[5] J. D. B. DeBow, "Texas—a Province, Republic, and State," *DeBow's Review*, XXIII (1857), 243.

[6] D. C. Corbitt, "Shipments of Slaves from the United States to Cuba, 1789-1807," *Journal of Southern History*, VII (1941), 549.

[7] Vincent Nolte, *Fifty Years in Both Hemispheres, or Reminiscences of the Life of a Former Merchant* (New York, 1854), 189.

[8] Sam Steer to John Minor, August 3, 1818: Minor (William J. and Family) Papers, Department of Archives, Louisiana State University.

the United States were discovered by government officials, they were sold at auction. Any informer who brought about their discovery was to be rewarded with half the proceeds of the sale. This law was the cornerstone of the Bowie scheme. After bringing a coffle of bewildered Africans across the Sabine River, the Bowies took them to a point near a United States Marshal's station, left them tethered in the woods, and became the informers. The United States Marshal—and one suspects that he connived at this chicanery—then held an auction as the law demanded. At this legal sale in the wilderness the Bowies were the only bidders. They bought the Negroes at a low price, received half that price as the reward for informing on themselves, and, most important of all, got from the marshal a bill of sale which permitted them legally to sell the Negroes anywhere in the United States where slavery was legal. One of the Bowie brothers reported in later years that this had been repeated often enough for the three to clear a profit of $65,000.[9]

Records proving that actual smuggling of blacks into Louisiana continued after the early 1820's have not been discovered, though rumors of smuggling were common. It is difficult to say whether illegal importation of Negroes ceased or whether smugglers became more circumspect, but it is most unlikely that smuggling persisted on a scale comparable to that in the period from 1804 to 1820. Few, if any, of those Negroes introduced in Louisiana illegally before 1820 were taken from Africa for the purpose of sale into the United States. Rather they were intended for the Spanish sugar islands and came on the American market as a result of the raids of privateers or pirates on Spanish commerce. The end of piracy, and the reduction in privateering as the Spanish-American colonies gradually established their independence, dried up this source of supply. At the same time, the increasing volume of the domestic slave trade largely satisfied the demand for slaves in Louisiana.

On the other hand, the archives of the United States Cus-

[9] A. R. Kilpatrick, "Early Life in the Southwest—the Bowies," *DeBow's Review*, XIII (1852), 380-381.

toms House in New Orleans show that rumors of smuggling were being investigated throughout the two decades preceding the Civil War.[10] As late as 1860 the British consul at Galveston reported to his government that a Louisiana planter had revealed to him that he was on a trip to Indianola, Texas, "to buy African Negroes."[11] There was, of course, a flurry of slave-smuggling in 1860-1861, and there are reliable reports of newly imported Negroes seen at Memphis in 1860 and in Alabama in 1861, but if any such Negroes came to Louisiana, they were well-concealed.[12]

Though the physical importation of African Negroes into Louisiana had come to a halt, or almost so, talk about the foreign slave trade grew in volume as the 1850's drew near their end. In 1858 a committee of the Louisiana Legislature approved a bill which would have permitted citizens of Louisiana to import slaves from Brazil, Cuba, and Africa. This committee's majority report defended the constitutionality of the bill by asserting that the people of Louisiana had never granted to the Federal Government the right to prohibit the foreign slave trade. After the bill had passed the lower house of the legislature, State Senator Edward Deloney of Clinton wrote an article for *DeBow's Review* urging that it be passed by the State Senate. The existing scarcity of Negroes, he said, brought about high prices, and high prices encouraged monopoly, thus intensifying the scarcity. Because of an inadequate labor supply, the South was not producing to full capacity, and this would be corrected by increasing the supply of Negroes. In addition, an influx of Negroes would spread slave ownership more widely among the Southern people, thus providing the institution with greater popular support. Lastly, the increased supply of slaves would make possible the settlement of new territories by slaveholders, thus restoring the South to equality within the union.

[10] Excerpts from the Letter Books of the United States Customs House New Orleans, Louisiana, 1834-1912: Survey of Federal Archives in Louisiana, 1937-1938 (Typescript), *passim*.

[11] Laura A. White, "The South in the 1850's as Seen by British Consuls," *Journal of Southern History*, I (1935), 38.

[12] Nevins, *The Emergence of Lincoln*, II, 35; William Howard Russell, *My Diary North and South* (New York, 1863), 74.

Deloney's arguments failed to convince a majority of the members of the State Senate, and the bill never became law.[13]

Another attempt to reopen the African slave trade was disguised as the "African Apprentice Bill." As reported out of committee, this bill authorized the firm of J. H. Brigham and Associates "to import into the state of Louisiana . . . twenty-five hundred free Africans: *Provided,* they shall be indentured as apprentices . . . for . . . not less than fifteen years."[14] This bill passed the State House of Representatives in 1857, and failed of passage in the Senate by only one vote. Opposition increased before the next meeting of the legislature. Newspapers denounced the bill as a fraud, which it undoubtedly was. In Caldwell Parish, when an incumbent senator died, voters at a caucus demanded that the candidate pledge himself to oppose the bill. State sentiment was so definitely against the measure that the House of Representatives quickly tabled it by a vote of thirty-seven to seventeen when it was introduced again in 1859.[15]

When a committee of the Louisiana House of Representatives recommended repeal of the federal statute prohibiting the foreign slave trade on the grounds that it was unwise and unconstitutional, the committee's minority report, after defending the constitutionality of the national law, went on to summarize the arguments against reopening the foreign slave trade.

In the first place, the minority believed such a step to be "against the wishes of a very large majority of the people of the slave states and the entire sentiment and conviction of the people of the free states." The importation of more Negroes would increase the production of cotton and sugar,

[13] "Report of the Committee on Federal Relations to the Senate of Louisiana on the Bill Entitled 'An Act to Authorize the People of Louisiana to Import Negro Slaves'," *Documents of the First Session of the Fourth Legislature of the State of Louisiana,* 1858 (Baton Rouge, 1859), 1-10; Edward Deloney, "The South Demands More Negro Labor," *DeBow's Review,* XXV (1858), 491-506.

[14] "Report of the Special Committee to which was referred a Bill to grant the Authority of the State of Louisiana for the importation of free black laborers within the State," *Documents of the Second Session of the Third Legislature of the State of Louisiana,* 1857 (New Orleans, 1858), 2.

[15] *West Baton Rouge Sugar Planter,* April 10, May 1, 1858, March 12, 1859.

but more production would bring about lower prices for those commodities. An influx of Africans would reduce the value of the Negroes already held in Louisiana— "The present owners would be ruined . . . ." The report cited Calhoun's opposition to the foreign slave trade and insisted that the natural increase of the slaves already in the country was enough to satisfy normal demand.

High prices existing at the time of the report were regarded as no argument for reopening the trade with Africa, because these prices were a reflection of the increased productivity which increased skill, better seed, and improved implements had made possible. Also the minority believed, probably correctly, that the increased supply of gold resulting from discoveries in California and Australia had contributed to high slave prices.

Poor farmers would not benefit from an increased supply of Negroes, because the value of what they produced would decrease with the general decline of commodity prices. Many slaveless whites would be driven from the South, and these were the men who must shoulder the burden of defending the region if armed defense became necessary. The minority report pointed out that much of the soil in the South was already exhausted, and that many of the acres yet uncultivated were unfit for slave labor. The majority contention that the poorer classes would be strengthened in their support of slavery was answered by the assertion that the people of the South were already united to a greater degree than ever before. Any attempt to revive the foreign slave trade would foster division and discord.

Finally, said the minority report:

> The effect of the introduction of these savages . . . upon our present civilized and happy negro population would no doubt be demoralizing and injurious. It would render them unhappy, discontented and insubordinate; the spirit of insurrection and revenge would take the place of the respect and affection they have for their owners now. It would be cruel and unjust on our part to place the savage

> African upon an equality with the civilized slaves of the Southern States, and that without any show of justice or reason to support it.[16]

To summarize briefly, the people of Louisiana felt themselves injured when the foreign slave trade was prohibited and for almost two decades after the Louisiana Purchase, slave smuggling was carried on to such an extent that it was almost common. Smuggling ceased to be frequent, and may have halted completely, after the early 1820's. In the late 1850's there were attempts to reopen the African slave trade by subterfuge, and by outright defiance of federal law, but these efforts were effectively blocked by the people of Louisiana.

[16] "Minority Report of the Committee on Federal Relations of the House of Representatives Relative to the Repeal of the Laws of the United States against the African Slave Trade," *Legislative Documents*, 1858, 7-15.

Joseph Carson, Louisiana Confederate Soldier

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IN THE CARSON PAPERS[1] appears a biographical sketch of Joseph Carson (1843-1902) of Louisiana and Mississippi, an account which illustrates the high educational standards of the planter class in the South before the Civil War, the personal hardships of soldiers during the war, and the social upheaval in the years following. In addition, the account of military activity in northeast Louisiana throws some light on that little-known part of the history of the Trans-Mississippi Department which, after its severance from the Confederacy at the fall of Vicksburg, operated almost independently.

Joseph Carson was born in Lexington, Kentucky, while his parents were spending the summer there away from their plantation in Adams County, Mississippi. Son of Dr. James Green Carson, a wealthy planter and landowner, Joe was two years old when his family moved from Mississippi to Airlie

[1] The Carson Papers, assembled by William Waller Carson before his death in Knoxville, Tennessee, in 1930, contain biographical and descriptive sketches of importance in Louisiana and Mississippi history. Much of this material has been published in John Q. Anderson's "Dr. James Green Carson, Ante-Bellum Planter of Mississippi and Louisiana," *Journal of Mississippi History,* XVIII (Oct., 1956), 243-267; and "The Narrative of John Hutchins," *ibid.,* XX (Jan., 1958), 1-29. The Carson Papers were kindly loaned the editor by Mr. Joseph Carson, Milwaukee, Wisconsin, son of Joseph Carson, subject of this sketch.

plantation in Carroll Parish in northeast Louisiana. Located about thirty-five miles above Vicksburg on the west bank of the Mississippi River, Airlie became a model cotton plantation where Joe grew up in an atmosphere of wealth, refinement, and carefully supervised religious and academic training. Under tutors he studied Latin, mathematics, science, history, and poetry and was prepared to enter college when his enlistment in the Confederate Army ended his formal education.

Though servants were numerous at Airlie, Joe was responsible for the care of his own horses and hunting and personal equipment. Boyhood sports of hunting, fishing, and swimming gave him an intimate knowledge of the woods, bayous, and swamps of the surrounding country, information which later became invaluable to him as a scout in the Confederate Army. Because of his youth and parental objection, he did not enlist until the summer of 1862, when the threat against Vicksburg became severe. Like most young men of his area, he joined a Mississippi organization. Late in December, 1862, the Federal army, intent on subjugating Vicksburg, landed in the neighborhood of Airlie, and the Carson family fled westward, eventually to Texas,[2] where Joe's father died in August, 1863. Joe learned two months later of his father's death, obtained leave, and went to Tyler, Texas, to see about his mother. On his return journey to his company, he was unable to get across the enemy-held Mississippi River; consequently, he joined the 4th Louisiana Cavalry, then operating in northern Louisiana, and served the remainder of the war with that organization.

[2] General William T. Sherman's army of about 30,000 troops landed on Christmas Day a few miles from Airlie. The few Confederates in the area withdrew, and the Federals, soon under General Grant's command, occupied the region in preparation for the attack on Vicksburg.—*Personal Memoirs of General W. T. Sherman*, 2 vols., 3d ed. (New York, 1890), I, 333 ff; *Personal Memoirs of U. S. Grant*, 2 vols., 2d ed. (New York, 1917), I, 441 ff; *The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies* (Washington, 1880-1901), 128 vols., series 1, XXIV, part 1, *passim*; *ibid.*, part 3, *passim*. For a description of civilian life in the occupied area and the flight of the planters, see John Q. Anderson (ed.), *Brokenburn: The Journal of Kate Stone, 1861-1868* (Baton Rouge, 1955), 164-225.

In 1917, fifteen years after Joe's death, his brother William Waller Carson, who served with him in the 4th Louisiana Cavalry, wrote the sketch which follows. Professor Carson, who at that time had retired after forty years of teaching at the University of Tennessee, wrote with objectivity and humor and without sentimentality. The narrative, which Professor Carson apologized for as "largely of little war incidents" intended "to portray Joe's personality," is here given in the writer's own words though episodes have been rearranged in chronological order and in some instances reparagraphed.

"Joseph Carson was my brother. We were raised together, were playmates, classmates, and companions until he entered the Army. Later we belonged to the same regiment for about one and a half years, were thrown together from time to time thereafter—sometimes for weeks at a time—and corresponded constantly between times. He was one and a half years older and always took the lead. Indeed, he never ceased to regard himself as my natural adviser and protector and, to some extent at least, even as my guardian. And so our intercourse, whether oral or written, was affectionate, cordial, sympathetic, and frank. . . .

"In physique Joe was rather less than the medium in weight and height, quick, active and somewhat restless. Thanks to the good sense of our father, to the guns, the boats, the dogs and horses, and to that splendid out of doors gymnasium with which he equipped our home, and to the insistence with which he encouraged our sports and compelled us to jump and to run and to use the gymnasium, Joe had a splendid all around physical development. He was an exceptionally fine swimmer. Indeed, few men were more at home on a horse or in navigating any inland body of water, whether the craft was a horse, a log, a skiff, or a dugout. In ability and readiness to endure fatigue, exposure or privation, he was quite remarkable. Even after the war he suffered much from nasal catarrh intensified by later exposure in connection with the levees, but brought on originally by exposure during the last winter of the war as he went to and fro without change of

clothes through rain and cold swimming on his horse if ferry or bridge were lacking. . . .

"He entered the Army at 18¾. . . . As to his entrance to the army, a number of young men of his age had enlisted but Joe had been kept by his parents from doing so and had become very restless.[3] The first siege of Vicksburg was in process. We could hear the guns as the bombardment proceeded, and even see a faint glow on the sky at night as a gun would flash. The place was commanded by Gen. Earl Van Dorn, with Gen. J. C. Breckinridge second in command. Early one morning our mother came into our room in tears and informed us that Gen. Breckinridge had offered to take Joe on his staff as a Volunteer Aide, and that she and father had decided to let him go.[4] So he hurried off to Vicksburg taking as a valet one of our young negro men, Sam Sargent by name. Sam, however, proved well nigh useless. For the bombardment was so constant and as he did not like shells, his time was passed largely underground in what are now called 'dugouts.'

"As to the date, I only know that Joe was there before July 15, 1862, for on that day the Confederate ram *Arkansas* came out of the Yazoo River, fought its way thru the Federal Fleet and reached Vicksburg so badly shot up that she could steam but one mile an hour. However, she had inflicted so much damage that everybody was wild with delight and thought she could whip the whole Yankee fleet. So it was decided to send her out that night to finish up the job. But she had lost so heavily herself in killed and wounded that it was necessary to add to her crew as well as to patch her machinery and smoke stack. So she called for Volunteers and speedily got all the men she wanted. But tho the mechanics worked all night they failed to fit her for service. When day broke, saner counsels prevailed and the plan was given up. As Joe was

[3] Kate Stone (*ibid.*, 120), a neighbor of the Carsons, wrote on June 17, 1862: "Mrs. Carson is much depressed, worrying all the time about Joe's going to the army. She will not let him get off."

[4] *Ibid.*, 131. On July 11, Kate wrote: "Mrs. Carson has at last given her consent for Joe to go and he is in the wildest spirits. . . . Mrs. Carson is quite resigned to Joe's going. . . . We shall miss Joe greatly, but I am so glad he is going. It is his duty. He is as old as Brother Coley, about nineteen."

one of the volunteers and slept on the boat that night, I know that he was already then in Vicksburg.

"But the particular form of service that he rendered there did not appeal to him, for he soon came to regard a Volunteer Aide as a useless appendage. So as soon as the siege of Vicksburg was abandoned, he hurried home and easily secured, now that the ice was broken, permission from his parents to become a real soldier. He then set out to find the 28th Mississippi Cavalry (Col. Peter B. Sparks [Starke]). But before going he changed his valet, taking this time a somewhat older negro, Pompey Small, who served him to the very end of the war with that signal faithfulness and loyalty and love so often found in the negro before the advent of the carpetbagger. Moreover, Pompey's love and friendship for Joe remained firm and true, despite the differences in their political faiths, to the very hour of Joe's death.[5]

"And here I will make a considerable digression. For I want to say something about an anomaly that was found perhaps only in their negro valets. My brothers, Joe and Jim,[6] each had his valet, as had I. Joe's was Pompey Small, Jim's was Anderson Walker, and mine was Dan Parker.[7] It may not have been contemplated in the army Regulations but whenever anything was to be had we drew rations for our negroes and for their horses with no more of question than

[5] In a letter written in July, 1955, Joseph Carson of Milwaukee said of Pompey: "Pompey with his wife Alice was one of the former Carson slaves who came over into Mississippi with my Father when he cleared the Coahoma County land. I remember him well. He died some time after 1903. . . . When the Spanish American War broke out, the news reached the quarters late one night. The next morning Pompey was at our back door at four. My Father went out in his night clothes. Pompey said, 'Boss, dere's a war. Is you gwine? I's ready.' I believe he was quite let down when my Father told him that they were too old, wars were for young men."

[6] Jim (James Green Carson) was the third Carson son, born in 1846.

[7] Kate Stone (*Brokenburn*, 287), describing the Carson boys' servants on furlough with their masters in Texas in 1864, said: "They are the most independent and consequential personages in Tyler. They speak very learnedly of their furloughs and have wordy debates on the subject of rank. Pompey maintains that he and Marse Joe outrank Dan and Marse Willy by reason of their longer service and doing more duty in the field, a fact that Dan is loth to admit. Pompey is quite contemptuous in speaking of Marse Willy and Dan as holiday soldiers and speaks with great respect of the pleasures of a campaign across the river where they have 'so much more fun fighting and shooting.'"

for ourselves. I always suspected that this was simply winked at and for the reason that we so seldom drew our pay. These negroes, being non-combatants, rode at the rear of the regiment and were expected, tho not required, to keep at a reasonable distance from the firing line or other source of danger. And so a negro seldom went out with a small scouting party or to a picket post as in either case he would be exposed to whatever firing there might be. And so there would be days at a time in which the master would get no good from his negro or even see him. But the negro was an immense convenience to his master, notwithstanding, in that he did in general relieve the latter of such domestic drudgery as cooking, washing, sewing, caring for his horse, etc.; and that he remained to care for him and his horse if (as happened the oftener because of our inadequate hospital outfit) he had to be left sick or wounded at some country house.[8] The function of the negro was to relieve the master of what I have called the domestic drudgery. I never heard of a case in which he relieved him of any part of his official drudgery, such as sweeping the camp, butchering beeves, driving hogs, hauling corn, or grinding the latter with a dull hand mill on a hot day. I do not suppose that the other soldiers would have tolerated any such substitution for a minute, or that they would have been willing to work alongside of a negro in any of these duties. A specially anomalous state of affairs was this—that the domestic side of a private soldier's life was quite often easier and more dignified than that of an officer over him, for some privates had valets while some officers had not.

"But to return: Joe found the 28th Mississippi Cavalry at Bolivar, Miss., and enlisted in it (August 8, 1862) as a private in Company C (Capt. Buckner).[9] With this regiment he saw strenuous service for fourteen months and rose first

[8] Such was the case of Kate Stone's brother, Walter, who joined the 28th Mississippi Cavalry at seventeen in 1862 and who died of fever in a home in Cotton Gin, Mississippi, in 1863. Joe Carson's Pompey was left behind to wait on Walter and was with him when he died.—*Ibid.*, 186 ff.

[9] The date is correct according to a photostatic copy of Joe's service record in Carded Records of Military Service, Confederate States Army, National Archives and Records Service, Washington, D. C.

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to the rank of Sergeant and then to that of Color Sergeant, having been complimented several times for gallantry in action and recommended twice for a commission.

"At different times the Federal Authorities transported large numbers of troops on the Mississippi River. The troops would be crowded on ordinary river steamers, called transports then, and convoyed by gunboats. I am of the opinion that the Confederate Cavalry would have done vastly more than it did to harass these troops but for the inertia of the 'Higher Ups.' Not long after Joe enlisted in the 28th Miss. the regiment was ordered to the river for that purpose. For this kind of work it would dismount and lie on a caving bank because the current that scoured away the bank had brought the channel near. Moreover, in low water—and little could be done in high—this bank would generally stand as a bluff some 20 or 30 ft. high, which gave much protection against shells and grape-shot from the gunboats.

"One day from such vantage ground the 28th poured a fire into the portholes of a gunboat, hot enough to cause it to keep those portholes closed until it passed beyond rifle range, after which they were opened again to let the shells come forth. . . . The transport landed a force of infantry to drive off the vexatious cavalry. In default of a trench the dismounted cavalry took position in the bed of a bayou then dry and along which ran a country road. But the enemy also landed artillery, apparenty while the fight progressed, for it came as a great surprise. All of a sudden the guns took position in the road at the bend of the bayou and swept its bed with grape-shot.

"The ability of the Confederate soldier to initiate never had clearer illustration and seldom has there been greater unanimity of effort or celerity of execution, for grape-shot range is most impelling. As one man, that regiment sought the nearest cover—an adjacent bend in the bayou's bed. Joe, as he soon found out, had been too much weakened by recent chills to keep up with that procession. But time was golden and after this failure of pedal effort his only hope of

escape lay in mental effort. So he climbed up into the road on which the battery stood and then walked straight along it with what speed he could. For he correctly argued that a [artillery] gun would not be turned on a single man, however near, so long as there was a whole regiment to shoot at. In this affair one of his mess mates was disemboweled by a grape-shot.

"A little spat that he had during his service with this regiment [throws] something of light on the kind of discipline that so often obtained in the Confederate Army and on the freedom of intercourse between officers and men. It also shows how shocking to a professional soldier were the ideas that some of those gallant but uncouth officers brought with them into the service and what little respect they had at first for what even they later came to regard as sacred. It is a well known fact that Minie balls gravitate in battle towards the colors. It seems that in some little fight in which his regiment was engaged the flag had been down a time or two when Joe seized it. . . . A nearby officer, one of the captains, I suppose, seeing that more balls than its pro rata were reaching that part of the field, ordered him to 'take that damned flag to the rear.' Joe answered, 'You go to the rear yourself if you want to, but this flag is going to stay here.' . . .

"When he was 19½ years old his regiment, the 28th Miss., charged two regiments of the enemy's infantry on the edge of Franklin, Tenn., who did not wait for the shock but scurried for the houses. The regiment was at once among them, shooting them down as they ran. Suddenly one man turned, fired into the Confederates, and then deliberately walked towards the houses. Joe, who was passing near, leveled his pistol on him, but ere he pulled the trigger he repented and shot at a fugitive. In answer to my suggestion that he should have shot the first, as presumably the best soldier of that command, he answered, 'I could not afford to kill a man who was doing his duty as bravely as that man was.' It may not be without [importance] to add that in the above little affair of fifteen or twenty minutes Joe's saddle was destroyed as he rode upon it by a ball that passed under him but over his

horse without harm to either, also that the regiment lost more than twenty percent of its men in killed or wounded. . . .

"In one charge . . . I do not recall when or where, Joe's horse, affrighted at something, rose on his hind legs, turned through a right angle and brought down both fore feet squarely on the breast of a wounded Yankee, who lay upon his back. Joe never knew the result for he carried the flag and led the charge, but a number of times in his talks with me since then he has spoken of the groan of the wounded man and expressed his horror at the mishap. . . .

"Joe had almost a contemptuous disregard of anything that had to do with his bodily comfort. One of our lacks which I do not suppose, however, he recognized as a lack of comfort, was our lack of tents and adequate clothing. I have no reason to think that the 28th Cavalry fared better than did the 4th Louisiana.[10] In this last there was the hospital tent and two private tents—one owned by the Major and the other by the Lieutenant-Colonel, with the latter of whom the Colonel generally found shelter. But, in general, officers and men alike lay on the ground and took the weather as it came. However, in camps occupied, say, for a week or more, especially in cases of severe cold or prolonged rains, numerous structures would rise, covered with whatever could be had, say, leaves, bark, slabs of wood, earth, blankets and now and then a rubber cloth—anything in fact that could turn wind or rain. Indeed, as the war wore on, a few cotton flaps appeared, but as I remember their stay was short. I do not think that Joe ever drew from the Government a blanket, coat or other thing to wear, or indeed anything else save food and things to shoot with and perhaps a few doses of medicine. Our paymaster seldom appeared. I got two months' pay for my two years of service. . . . Whether he got anything for his service with the 28th Miss., I do not know.[11]

[10] Professor Caron's outfit.

[11] Carded Records of Military Service, C.S.A., show that Joe was paid during his service with the 28th Mississippi in August, October, and December, 1862, and in February, April, and June, 1863, and that he drew forty cents a day for his horse at each of these pay periods.

"So Joe often lacked clothes that he sadly needed, the need (depending on the season) being sometimes due to weather conditions and sometimes to aesthetic. That which I now have in mind related to the last. When with the advent of the U. S. Gunboats our neighbors, the Bonhams, had to leave the Miss. River, they took refuge in the interior east of Vicksburg. In Johns[t]on's maneuvers, Joe's regiment was passing near the Bonham house, and of course [he] wanted to see the family, especially Miss Belle. But he had only a jacket and a pair of pants that lacked the seat. The garment coextensive with the pants had already worn away and ceased to be. However, the weather conditions did not demand a seat and aesthetic requirements were abundantly met by the saddle or any other seat available.

"So he dismounted in front of the Bonham house and easily reached the needed seat without turning his back to the ladies, if indeed they had [not] already entered the room. But he shrank with more than usual dread from the idea of parting. For the gate beyond which his horse was tied was quite a distance from the house, and the family would, of course, gather on the porch and have the last possible look at their old friend as he walked away. Joe, apparently greatly interested in the farewell words, backed to the porch and down the steps and along the walk. He kept his hands behind him loosely holding his hat, a hat large enough to do the service so soon to be rendered by the saddle. When the increasing distance barred further talk, Joe turned but kept his head still bare until the saddle could relieve the hat.[12] (And here let me add that an element of sadness always attended the visit of a young man soldier to his former neighbors, for these knew that their account of that visit might turn out to be the last news of him to reach his family).[13]

12 A description of this incident appeared in the "Deep in Dixie" column of the New Orleans *Times-Picayune States Roto Magazine*, April 19, 1956.

13 The Bonhams had also been neighbors of the Stones. Mrs. Bonham, in fact, nursed Kate's brother Coleman in her home in Clinton, Mississippi, and in September, 1863, reported his death to the Stones who were then in Texas. Coleman was also a member of the 28th Mississippi, and Joe Carson was with him when he died.—*Brokenburn*, 259-262.

"Meanwhile, our father (late in 1862), finding it necessary to leave the river [Airlie] in order to escape the enemy's gunboats and raiding parties, had bought a plantation in the swamp to which he moved his family and negroes.[14] But early in 1863 he realized that the swamp would be no protection against Federal raids. So as soon as the overflow subsided enough to permit it, he set out with his family and negroes to seek a place of safety in Texas. The trip was slow. For as we had burned our cotton to prevent its capture, there was no money and stops had to be made wherever the work of the negroes could be exchanged for something to eat. And the case was not so simple either, for our father was Executor of the Railey estate and so had to take along about 300 negroes, I suppose, in addition to his own, say, 500 in all. As Father with his family, white and black, wended his way westward, he died suddenly in Tyler, Texas, August 11, 1863. Joe did not hear of his father's death until October. Getting a sixty-day furlough, he and Pompey set out for Texas, riding forty miles a day. They crossed the Mississippi River at night in a skiff, swimming their horses beside it, for the gunboats patrolled the river.

"On their way back in December, Joe spent a couple of days with the 4th Louisiana Cavalry (Col. A. J. McNeill) to which I belonged, operating just then . . . near the Mississippi River. They [Joe and Pompey] went thence to the river on whose banks they spent some eight or ten days, as I remember, trying to find a skiff or dugout in which to cross as before. They would have succeeded ultimately, of course, for the Federals were unable to destroy all boats. But before they did succeed the weather turned very cold and Joe decided that the horses could hardly survive the swim of an hour or more in that icy water. The Confederate Cavalry furnished their own horses; so as a cavalry soldier with no horse and no money with which to buy one would be useless, he wisely gave up the effort and returned to our regiment.

". . . As our home was broken up, and our family income cut off, our cotton burned, and our father dead, we were

[14] Anchorage plantation was about twenty miles inland from the Mississippi. See "Dr. James Green Carson," *Journal of Mississippi History*, XVIII, 262-263.

decidedly short of money. The wear on our clothes was great and none were to be bought even though we had the money. It was only at long intervals that opportunity offered to get anything from our temporary home in Texas, and even then we could not receive [it] because we could not carry more than a single suit and an extra suit of underwear. . . . Through my Captain and Colonel he reported his predicament, and asked for instructions. Col. [Isaac F.] Harrison instructed him to report for duty to Company B (to which I belonged), 4th La. Cav., and promised to arrange the matter with the department.[15] Shortly after entering the regiment he was appointed Sergeant and soon made a record for himself as a good soldier and a daring scout. Through my own association with the officers and men I know that this was the estimate of him that obtained throughout the regiment. . . .

"Joe had a quick mind and could make apt and forceful answers. In January, 1864, a flag of truce set out from our regiment for the fort at Goodrich's,[16] half a mile from Airlie. It was intercepted, however, by an enemy foraging party and held under guard three days, our officers being sent to Goodrich's. The foraging party consisted of about a regiment of negro soldiers whose officers, as in all other cases known to me, were white. The feelings between our men and the negro troops, especially their officers, were intensely bitter along that front. In no fight was it known beforehand whether quarter would be given. Indeed, it was near to both this time and place that one of our Captains, Charlie Collins, of Company C, a most lovable young man of about twenty-three was murdered by negro troops commanded by an officer named Sturgis.

[15] Apparently notice was never received by his old outfit, for the company muster roll (Carded Records, C.S.A.) for November-December, 1863, states: "Deserted: Received furlough to December 8, 1863. Not since been heard from." His service with the 4th Louisiana is not shown. Harrison's Independent Cavalry Brigade consisted of the 3rd Louisiana, commanded by Col. Harrison, the 4th Louisiana, Col. A. J. McNeill, and the 5th Louisiana, Col. Richard L. Capers.

[16] Goodrich's Landing on the west bank of the Mississippi. J. P. Blessington, who served with Walker's Texas Division in the area in 1863, said: "This fort . . . was a garrison of negro troops for the purpose of raiding and destroying everything that could assist any of our troops. They [were] . . . headed by their officers (white men) . . . ." *The Campaigns of Walker's Texas Division By a Private Soldier* (New York, 1875), 114.

"But somehow or other some of the Yankees on this occasion seemed to fancy Joe. Ignoring difference of rank, they would invite him to their quarters to have a good time, while negro soldiers with fixed bayonets stood guard over the rest of us. Of course, these officers knew how much drudgery, even under the best of conditions, attached to the life of a private soldier in active service. And they also knew that we served under conditions that were exceptionally severe. Evidently thinking that such things would appeal to Joe, one of the Captains took him aside and said, 'We want to get young men from the South into our Army. If you will leave your people and come to us, you can get almost anything in the way of a commission that you want.' Joe answered, 'The negroes are still bringing good prices on the other side of Bayou Macon (our picket line). If you will march your company to that side, you can get almost anything in the way of money that you want.' The Captain replied, 'I see the point.' Joe was fond of anything resembling a joke, and he delighted to tease. But he never did or said anything that carried a sting. It was simply a bit of pleasantry that had in it more or less of wit. . . .

"He was then twenty and a half years old, and the Second Sergeant of his Company. In the absence of the First Sergeant, the duties of the latter, of course, fell on Joe that day. The horses having been worn by strenuous service, his brigade had been withdrawn to the far side of a little bayou about five miles from the enemy to unsaddle and rest. A country road crossed the bayou and a bridge [and] wound its way in the general direction of the enemy. The Captain of Joe's Company was forty-five years old and tall, brave, and determined, but somewhat slow of thought and slower still of body. I do not know where the Lieutenants were but the Captain and Joe and several others were playing cards. They sat on a blanket spread upon the ground.

"As Joe was dealing, there came the report of a gun from the pickets on the road just mentioned. He dashed the cards to the ground and sprang to his feet. The Captain reached for the scattered cards and said, 'You are in a hell of a hurry.'

Joe answered, 'You will have a Yankee saber over your head in three minutes if you don't hurry too.' With that he rushed for his horse, yelling, 'Fall in, Company B! Fall in, Company B!' since, as I suggested above, it devolved on him to form the company. He saddled and mounted and was again yelling, 'Fall in, Company B!' as the bugles began frantically to ring out the 'Saddle Up' and the 'Mount' almost as if they were a single call. While the Captain was still trying to saddle his horse, the rapid approach of the firing convinced Joe that the pickets were not equal to the situation and that unless somebody did something to gain time the fight would occur in their own camp and before the men could form.

"The emergency was great, so he did that which in almost any other army would have caused him to be court martialed and even shot. He knew that such rapid advance thru that character of country meant (as he afterwards explained) that the enemy was still in column. He knew that a sufficiently savage attack on the head of that column would throw it into confusion and almost surely cause it to halt and form line of battle. And time was the one thing needed then. So with no word to the Captain, who was not yet on his horse, he took the men now in line, about half the company, and dashed off to carry out his plan. But his plan was thwarted at the bridge, for there he found the Senior Colonel standing alone with his pistol drawn. He ordered Joe to stop and hold the bridge. Suffice it to say that, with the help that later came, the bridge was held and the day was saved. To me the point of the incident is this—that out of the seventy-five or one hundred commissioned officers presumably present on that occasion not one seems to have shown himself able to think so clearly or to act so promptly as this twenty and one-half year old Sergeant. . . .

"In the summer of 1864 the 4th Louisiana Cavalry with no particular object that I could discover was again in the vicinity of Airlie. It moved along the byways and halted at a point in the woods, say, a mile or so from Airlie and the fort at Goodrich's just beyond. For Mrs. Johnson, wife of our Lieut. Col. was along on her way north, and it was hoped to

send her by flag of truce into the fort before any firing should occur. Joe and Scott Craig, a private of Company B, rode to Airlie to reconnoiter, having special orders to avoid anything apt to cause the fort or gunboat to shell the woods. Keeping under cover wherever possible, though all fences had been burned, they emerged at the rear of the Airlie overseer's house. A straight road about 500 yards long led east from the front of this house, thru the level 50 acre Quarter to the rear of the yard. As Joe and Scott rode up to the rear of the overseer's house a negro soldier ran out at the front and jumped upon his horse. As he would not heed their call to halt and as they must not shoot, they tried to run him down. He ran straight for the yard. Joe and Scott were gaining on him at every step, but suddenly a great horror seized them, for a few steps more would have taken them into the midst of about a regiment of white soldiers scattered over the yard with some congregated on one of the porches. Their arms were stacked and they were making no effort to shoot or get their guns but seemed wholly absorbed in the race. However, Joe and Scott could not feel sure that this absorption would last, and so they wheeled their horses with the utmost speed.

"When they had run far enough to feel safe, Joe wrote the commanding officer in about these words, 'I came to take this place but finding it stronger than I had supposed I have gone back to get another man to help me.' After signing his name to the communication, he instructed a nearby negro to take it to the officer in the yard. His note, simple, if not silly, written when he and his horse were panting for breath after their double race, seems to me to bring out the fact that Joe liked to joke, and also the more important fact that he felt no ill will toward that unknown Yankee or (hence) toward any Yankee. People do not indulge in pleasantries with those they personally dislike.

"The enemy outposts a few miles further on were of two kinds—the usual picket stand without fortification or protection for the men or guard, and the stockade. The stockades I refer to now were miniature loopholed wooden forts to shelter, say, a dozen men. They were located in the open fields

and were, I take it, mainly to protect the cotton raisers, for the U. S. sought to raise the fleecy staple. Of course, a shell or two would have knocked such a fort to pieces. But the battery that so often went with us was not along this time. So it is hard for me to believe that Col. McNeill really thought seriously of taking their stockades. But he called for Joe and asked him two questions: What he thought of the propriety of taking them, and how he would like to lead the assailing parties. Joe answered that he thought the stockades themselves could be of no use to us whatever, that the sole gain would lie in the number of the enemy that might be killed and captured, and that the loss to us in charging more than a mile through open fields would outweigh the gains. He added, however, that if the Colonel decided on the capture and put him in command he would do what he could.

"The Colonel marched on. But wishing to hide his movements by creating the impression that the regiment still remained in the locality, he instructed Joe to lie in the woods (for a week as I remember) with about a dozen men to drive in once a day the pickets from a certain open post. To do this Joe and his men had to ride through open and level fields for a mile or two, depending on the points of egress chosen. For several days he charged the pickets who would fall back to the fort. From this a detachment of cavalry would charge him and then he would scurry for the woods. The cavalry would never follow into the woods lest they should find our whole regiment in ambush there. Despite the constant firing, I never heard that anybody got hurt in these performances, for the firing was at long range and from running horses.

"Now, our men suffered much from chills, and Joe had a habit of going delirious for several hours when his fever rose to unusual height. One hot day with the fever on him, he set out for the usual routine but went absolutely crazy before the firing commenced. He wanted to get down and lie upon the ground. This in itself would have meant death in that broiling sun. And if the cavalry had charged him then, they

might or might not have given quarter. But his men, holding him in the saddle, led his horse back into the woods. . . .

"A few lines back I told of a consultation between a Colonel and a Sergeant. I have now to mention something similar between a Captain and a Sergeant. Just after the battle of Mansfield, [La., April 8, 1864] Captain John McNeill had been sent off on an errand with his squadron, Companies A and B of our regiment. It was near Alexandria, La. Learning on the way that a force of the enemy was about to strike our brigade, he hastened back to take part, if possible, in the fight. But on nearing the camp the firing told him that the fight was already raging although by reason of the woods he could not see the line-up. He hesitated, and dropping back to Joe he said, 'I don't know what to do; I don't know which side is next to us.' Joe answered, 'What difference does that make? The thing to do is to ride right in. If the Yankees are next to us we will strike them in the rear. If our men are next to us we will take our place in the line.' So they rode in and took position in our line which was next. . . .

"My recollection is that at the particular time of which I am about to speak, the efforts of the La. Cavalry were directed primarily not against the enemy but against the guer[r]illas and arresting all that could be found. In that case a number of parties were doubtless sent out that day, although I recall only two—one commanded by Sergeant Joseph Carson of Company B, the other by Lieutenant Tom Brigham of Company D. The latter, commanded by a Lieutenant, was presumably the larger, and on no other theory can I explain what I am about to describe.

"As clothes were scarce we drew on the enemy as far as possible for things to wear. These we dyed, generally brown or black as opportunity afforded. But opportunity does not seem to have afforded now, for on this occasion Brigham himself and a number of his men wore genuine blue. Joe had taken his party into a house for dinner. The fact that he had put out no picket confirms my impression that he was after guer[r]illas and had little thought of Yankees. However, a

small scouting party had a habit of taking chances, else life would be a burden. Now, Brigham was a young fellow with an established reputation for recklessness and dash. As he came near he learned of Joe's whereabouts and determined to have some fun. So he and his party of bluish hue charged the house, in warrior style. When the cry was raised, 'The Yankees are coming!' Joe ordered his men to get to their horses. He also rushed out but took position on foot behind the corner of the house so as to check the enemy long enough, if possible, for his men to mount and get away. As Brigham's blue coat came by that corner, Joe's pistol was at his breast. I suppose it was the closest call Brigham ever had in all his life, and in another fraction of a second he would have rolled from his horse with powder burns on that blue coat. But his hands went up in time and he yelled, 'For God's sake, Carson, don't you know me?' As Joe turned he found Jim at his back with his pistol drawn to help him stand off that on-coming mass of blue till the other men could escape. Jim was our brother three years younger than Joe and had but recently entered the service.[17] Joe was immensely gratified. In subsequent talks with me he repeatedly expressed his appreciation of Jim's course on that occasion and always with the greatest pride. . . .

"I remember that one night in September, 1864, an effort was made to capture the U. S. Gunboat *Rattler* not far from Natchez—an effort that I think must have succeeded but for the gross and cowardly failure of an officer of the Marines, to whom an essential feature of the program had been committed. The brigade furnished one hundred and fifty men for the undertaking—fifty volunteers from each regiment who I assumed were also to become the crew after the capture had been effected. The men to command these volunteers were appointed without regard to rank. I noticed that Joe was put second in command of the volunteers from our regiment and that several commissioned officers went under him as privates.

[17] Jim, about eighteen, enlisted at Monroe, Louisiana, in August, 1864.

"The first part of the program was for our volunteers to ambush and seize its boat. This much was done and we got thereby two dozen prisoners. They approached within a few feet before the challenge and surrendered without a shot. Joe at once sprang forward and snatched from one of them what in darkness seemed to be a flag furled about its staff. The report got out that he had the Yankee flag, and this was his first idea too. So he was much disgusted to find a minute later that it was only a big signal rocket. I think that the entire program thus auspiciously began. But despite our disappointment I have long felt that the failure of this attempt was a blessed thing for us. For success would have meant furious fighting a few hours later—our newly captured gunboat with its green crew of cavalry for the first time on water against one or more enemy gunboats with well trained crews. It does seem to me now that a child could have foretold the result. . . .[18]

"In the evening of May 18, 1865, the 4th La. Cavalry camped on the bank of Bayou Bartholomew, La. Next morning Joe and I left camp under orders, he to go east and I to go west, each with a small party. My own movements are so definitely fixed in my mind that I know the error, if any, in the above date cannot exceed a single day. Joe had orders to proceed to the Mississippi River then in flood and learn what he could as to the numbers and destination of any troops that the enemy might be transporting on the river. On reaching the edge of the overflowed country, he had, as he foreknew, to leave the horses and proceed in skiffs or dugouts a distance of say 20 to 40 miles depending on the obliquity of the route. He steered for Willow Point which lies about thirty miles north of Vicksburg and hence not far from Airlie. This point, which I suppose has long since caved away, then jutted far to the east and was the vertex of a sharp bend or angle of the river with long and somewhat curving sides. Joe knew peo-

[18] The Federal commander of the Mississippi Squadron reported to his New Orleans headquarters on September 14, 1864: "One of the gunboats of this division, the Rattler, was so unfortunate as to have 18 of her crew captured by a portion of Harrison's cavalry some nights since." The prisoners had been paroled and he requested permission to exchange the same number of Confederate prisoners for them.—*Official Records*, series 1, XLI, part 3, p. 182.

ple living on this point and doubtless hoped they could tell him things he would like to know. On reaching the higher ground that lies near the river, [he found that] the water became too shallow for their boats and indeed soon ceased altogether. So it became necessary to proceed on foot. But ere long they discovered a party of the enemy in their rear between them and their boats, presumably landed from a nearby gunboat which must have seen them.

"Their predicament was awkward in the extreme. They were on a narrow strip or point of land barely out of the water. Just behind them lay 20 miles of overflow which they could not cross without the boats just lost. Just before them lay another 20 miles of overflow which even their boats would not enable them to reach, for the Mississippi would first have to be crossed and in that lay the gunboat. They had but two alternatives—to fight their way back to their boats, or to surrender. Some of Joe's party wished to fight, notably our younger brother, James G. Carson, who was very insistent. But Joe said *no*, that the war was over, that he was not willing to shed more blood, and that he would surrender.

"This he did and asked his captors to take them to the captain of the gunboat. To the captain he stated the case and asked that the party be paroled, assuring him that they were not deserters but that they had been caught in a trap. He added that, as he believed the war was over, he thought it would be criminal to shed more blood. It turned out that the captain, Edward Fuller Brooks of Chicago, was quite a gentleman. He assured Joe that he too thought the war was over and that further bloodshed would be a crime. He said he thought Joe had done exactly right, that he did not consider them deserters in any sense, and that he would parole and release them. After further talk Joe learned that he was from Chicago and knew some of our Chicago kin . . . .

"The Union Prisoner of War Records on file in Washington say that Joe surrendered in New Orleans, May 26, and was paroled in Monroe, La., June 7, but I well know whereof

I write, and I do know that the record is wrong.[19] For capture and parole were effected at Willow Point, and I am satisfied that the [date of] May 22 for both cannot be in error more than a single day. Possibly the explanation is this, that the report of Captain Brooks reached the fleet commander in New Orleans, May 26, and that Joe was 'constructively' paroled with the regiment in Monroe on June 7, for that regiment was, in fact, paroled in Monroe about that time, though I do not recall the exact date."

Ex-soldier Joe and his brothers, William and Jim, immediately left Monroe and rode to Tyler, Texas, where they rejoined their family about the middle of June, 1865. Not quite twenty-three years old, Joe, the oldest son and head of the family, soon had the refugees ready for the trek back to Airlie. William and Jim remained in Texas to bring their former slaves as soon as the crops were gathered; how many of their 500 former slaves returned to Louisiana is not clear, but the Carsons probably, like other refugee planters, took as many as wanted to go. The following incident, the only one that Professor Carson mentioned occurring on the journey back to a devastated homeland, indicates that Joe went to Texas a second time in October to help his brothers escort the Negroes home.

"We were going home from Texas after the war. Joe was, of course, in charge. Shortly after we passed a regiment of negro soldiers, half a dozen of them slipped out of camp and attempted to plunder our wagon train, evidently thinking that no resistance would be made, for I suppose they thought, as I did, that if a collision occurred we would be massacred. Now, Joe, as an Ex-Confederate soldier, was already sorely chafed in mind. As a Southern white man he, of course, had ideas, though somewhat peculiar now, as to the respect due from the one race to the other. And he could not see that the blue uniform detracted in the least from his personal or property rights. The negroes had already halted a wagon

[19] General S. B. Buckner signed the surrender terms for the entire Trans-Mississippi Department in New Orleans late in May, and General E. Kirby Smith approved them in Shreveport on June 2, 1865.

and answered in an insolent way as he rode up that they were searching for pistols. Joe assured them that he had a pistol and reached for it . . . I saw him reach for his pistol and utter three words that would be sadly out of place in Sunday School . . . . The fact that the careers of Joe and Jim and me did not end an hour or so later is due, I think, to the fact that Joe reached to his bootleg in which he usually carried his pistol, whereas he had that morning put it in his belt. Before he found it the negroes had gone and reason returned . . . ."

Professor Carson rounded out the sketch of his brother with the following incidents that occurred after the war.

"Immediately after the war Joe, as the oldest son, took charge of the family's business and gave up all idea of a college education for himself. He arranged, however, for me, Jim, and Ed, the younger brothers, to go to college.[20] From that time until the day of his death his life was strenuous and discouraging in the extreme. The world does not yet understand what 'Reconstruction' meant to those people, nor how they were galled at every turn by the carpetbaggers, the Yankeeized negroes, and the general political and governmental debauchery. The State and county officials, with possibly no exceptions, were the public enemies and were loathed as such. And I well remember an occasion, indeed the only one that I can recall, on which even Joe's optimism failed to see the silver lining that is said to go with clouds. During a horseback ride in 1873, I think it was, he made to me this most pathetic of all his remarks, 'I would hate for my children to grow up with the idea that they have no country' . . . .

"After the war Joe spent several years in cotton planting on our plantation in Carroll Parish, La., and one year (as I remember) on a plantation owned by his father-in-law, the

20 William, James, and Edward attended Washington College (later Washington and Lee) immediately after the war when General Lee was president. Graduated with honors in 1868, William became an instructor there for a year, then worked as a civil engineer several years, taught at Davidson College for six years, and finally taught many years at the University of Tennessee.—*Carson Papers.*

late Judge J. W. Montgomery . . . . He lost six consecutive crops by overflows. It is easy to see that there was always a crisis—that at any time the loss of just one more crop, whether by broken levee or by political turmoil, might mean financial ruin, or that . . . the murder of his wife and children might result from one drink too much taken by a carpetbag speaker or from a remark of his misunderstood by his dusky audience. Joe told me once that when living in Louisiana he had carefully considered the question whether it had not become necessary for him to hang a certain carpetbagger by the name of York, lest his wife and child should be murdered by the negroes who were being frenzied by York's talks . . . .

"The rest of his life after the war, say, thirty-three or four years, was spent in opening and planting his Oasis plantation in Coahoma County, Miss.[21] . . . . I think that peace and quiet came [to that county] a year or two earlier than they would have done but for Joe. I do not recall the date but it must have been in 1875 or thereabouts. Carpetbag corruption had well nigh reached its lowest level. Each official seems to have kept as much or as little of an account of public money passing thru his hands as happened to accord with his capacity, convenience, or intentions. And so some of the offices furnished pickings that were particularly right and easy. A scramble for office which developed among the scalawags, the carpetbaggers, and the negroes, prominent in which was the negro Sheriff Brown, became so bitter that the citizens were drawn in. As the culmination drew near, the matter took on more and more the aspect of a country-wide contest between colors. The negroes were in large majority and were getting more insolent and overbearing towards everybody. They were getting more insistent that there should be a more equitable division of the harvest furnished by their votes.

"Hearing one day that there was about to be a clash, Joe

[21] Oasis Plantation, at Stovall, Mississippi, ten miles west of Clarksdale, is owned and operated by John P. Pelegrin, whose wife, the daughter of Montgomery Carson and Frances Dabney Carson, is the granddaughter of Joe Carson.

and Jim with our youngest brother Ed, then visiting them, rode to Friar's Point, the county seat, eight miles away. Of course, in those days everybody was armed all the time. On reaching the town they found that the whites under an Ex-Confederate Brigadier General congregated in one place and the negroes in another, that the leaders on both sides were trying to keep peace, and that a flag of truce yet within call had just been started by the general in command accepting a proposition that both sides disband. When Joe rode up and learned these facts, he told the whites that this was all wrong, that there was but one way to handle the situation. He insisted that the message be changed to this: 'We will give you ten minutes to get out of town.' He carried his point and the negroes melted away. They rallied, however, on a nearby plantation, but were easily scattered after a little fight.

"Then the whites separated in small groups and spent three days in patrolling the county and scattering the negroes wherever they congregated. Early in the affair Jim captured the negro Sheriff's horse which he rode all over the county with the most happy psychological effect. The Sheriff himself, I understand, was never seen in the county again. As far as I can judge, this stand of Joe's brought an era of peace, good will, and mutual understanding between the races that otherwise could hardly have come in years, and at a cost in bloodshed that was insignificant as compared with what would probably have occurred but for it. For after that there was relief and confidence. Before that there was constant dread, a dread which people of this day cannot comprehend.

"Dora, Joe's first wife,[22] stood by him through it all with a coolness, a loyalty, a sympathy, an understanding and a love possible only to the most lovely, gentle and exalted of the race. She kept a loaded pistol ever in reach except when Joe or Jim was present, and for days she kept a basket of food ready packed in case it became necessary to take refuge

22 Joe and Dora Montgomery Carson had two sons. After Dora's death, Joe married Frances Lee Bowmar in 1892. To them were born five children, four of whom are still living.

in the woods. A dense forest surrounded the house: the nearest white person was a full mile away, and the negroes were in a state of suppressed excitement. Under these circumstances a weaker man would have hesitated to leave his home unprotected on the day of that riot. But Joe did not hesitate. He saw that the general and aggressive treatment then possible promised more of safety than anything local and defensive. So he informed several of the more influential negroes that he was leaving for Friar's Point but that a reckoning would surely follow if, on getting back, he found that harm had come to his wife or children. Then he and Jim and Ed rode off with the result already stated.

"Not many people realized how much of pecuniary discouragement, expense and loss came to that delta region through the uncertain and breaking levees, demoralized labor and the ever-falling price of cotton, not to mention again the political condition just referred to. Joe lived just long enough to feel assured that the night was well nigh past and the day not far off—a day that came at last, and which now makes that country blossom as a rose. It does seem to me that his whole life after the war was a continual contest with carpetbaggers, scalawags, negroes, overflows, etc., always some and sometimes all. But he never doubted that the tide would some day turn, nor did he ever cease in his effort to make it turn . . . .

"It is a well-known fact that a man's bearing as a soldier in war is an expression of his real self more true by far than his career as a civilian . . . . while a soldier, I regarded [an enemy] not as an individual but as an official pure and simple and . . . I do not think I even felt personal bitterness. I am satisfied that this was also true of Joe. Indeed, I think he would have gone further out of his way to serve a Yankee prisoner than a Confederate soldier, because of the prisoner's helplessness. And as to that word 'Yankee'—that is now simply a provincialism. It has long since lost with me, as I think with Ex-Confederates generally, the idea of opprobrium that it used to carry."

Joseph Carson died at fifty-nine on October 20, 1902, and was buried at Indian Mound, Oasis Plantation. The *Delta Register,* Clarksdale, Mississippi, said on October 20 in an obituary: ". . . in this day when all the nicer graces seem to have been lost in the mad pursuit of selfish ends, he preserved in himself all of those delightful qualities of the true gentleman of fifty years ago, the man of the old school, chaste in life, refined of speech and thoughtful of his fellows, not given to harsh judgment, and disparaging evil report . . . a gentleman in all the term implies . . . ."

Vignettes

Historic Ground . . . The Site of Louisiana's State Capitol .

"The site . . . is historic ground; over it hovers the romance of the struggles of the great powers for supremacy of the Mississippi Valley. These extensive grounds . . . were occupied successively by the armed battalions of France, England, Spain, and America.

"Here, in 1779, Galvez, the Spanish Governor-General of Louisiana, after three days' battle, captured the British Garrison under Col. Dickson. Here, in 1810, Philemon Thomas, with his mixed band of pineswoodsmen and Ohio flatboatmen, captured the Spanish post, killing Grandpre, its commander, and wresting West Florida from Spain. Here nearly every prominent officer in the United States Army since the Revolution did duty. Wilkinson and the first Wade Hampton, Revolutionary heroes, commanded here; as did afterwards Gaines and Jesup and Taylor, heroes of the War of 1812. Here Winfield Scott, the conqueror of Mexico, saw his first service as lieutenant of artillery. Here Lafayette was received by the military and citizens in 1824, and Andrew Jackson later. Here was the home of Zachary Taylor, hero of Buena Vista and President of the United States, and of his brilliant son 'Dick', the distinguished Confederate general. Here, in 1861, the Louisiana State Guard, before the secession of Louisiana, took the garrison and the arsenal, with all their munitions of war, from the United States troops. Here, in 1862, General Breckinridge, commanding the Confederates, fought a desperate battle with the Union Army and Navy under Williams and Farragut. Williams was killed, and the Confederate ram Arkansas was blown up in full view.

"These grounds were trodden by Grant and Lee, Sherman and 'Stonewall' Jackson; by McClellan and the Johnstons, Bragg and Rosecrans; by Longstreet and Harney; George H. Thomas and Beauregard; by Forrest and Phil Sheridan, Hardee and Hood; by Hancock and Custer, Admiral Porter and Bishop-General Polk; and by the great civilians, Clay and Calhoun, Abraham Lincoln and Jefferson Davis.

" 'Loose thy shoe from thy foot, for the place whereon thou standest is holy.' "

Louisiana State University *Catalogue, 1910-1911* (Baton Rouge, 1911), 23-24.

No Whittling on Iberville Parish (Plaquemine) Court House Furniture

From a unanimously-adopted Police Jury Resolution, September 4, 1854:

"Be it further Resolved, That the Hon. W. B. Robertson Judge of the 6th District Court, requested to adopt stringent rules for the preservation of the furniture in the Court House and to prevent persons from whittling and otherwise injuring the chairs, tables and other fixtures belonging to the Court House."

Historical Records Survey, *Iberville Parish (Plaquemine), Police Jury Minutes,* I (1850-1862) (*Transcription of Parish Records of Louisiana* No. 24. University, Louisiana, 1940), 104.

Steamboat Justice

"I was on board the *City of Louisiana,* bound for New Orleans. There was a large number of passengers, and a heavy load of freight. The roof was literally covered with coops full of chickens and turkeys. I had old monte running in full blast, but the chicken men could not bet, as they were going to market instead of coming away. They were so very much interested in the game that they forgot to watch their coops. After a while one of them went up, and found that some one had stolen some of his chickens. The pilot told him he saw the man taking them, so he went down and told the Captain, and he sent for the pilot to pick out the thief. They found him and brought him into the cabin, when some one proposed to try him by judge and jury; so they elected me judge, and I impaneled a jury. We heard the evidence, and the attorneys made their arguments. Then I charged the jury, and they retired to the bar-room (as we did not have any regular jury room). They were out about as long as it would take a first-class barkeeper to make up twelve drinks, and then they filed back into the court-room, each one putting his handkerchief away, as if they had all been crying over the awful verdict

they were about to render. I asked the foreman if they had agreed upon a verdict, and he said, 'We have, your Honor.' Just at this time there was some commotion in the court-room (occasioned, no doubt, at the sight of the twelve handkerchiefs). I told the sheriff to rap for order, but it was some little time before it could be restored. I then told the jury to stand up and hear their verdict. The foreman read the verdict, which was: 'We, the jury, find the defendant guilty.' I then told the defendant to stand up and hear his sentence. 'You are to return the chickens to their owner, pay a fine of six bottles of wine and the costs of this suit, and be imprisoned in the bar-room until the fine and costs are paid.'

"As there was no other cases on the docket, I ordered the sheriff to adjourn court (to the bar). The sheriff went up with the man who had lost the chickens, and they picked out three dozen. When they came down and reported to me that they had returned three dozen chickens, the criminal yelled out that he had only taken one dozen. The poor fellow did not have the money to pay for the wine, so he had to give a bill of sale for his chickens.

"After all of my judicial duties were performed, and while the bar (of justice) was full of people, and the people were full (of what they got at the bar), I opened up the deal little three-card racket, and in a short time I owned every chicken and turkey on the roof of that boat.

"What to do with my live stock I did not know. I had a bill of sale from the chicken men, but what I wanted just then was a chicken buyer. I at last had an offer from the second clerk which was much less than the market value; but as I never had much use for anything I could not put in my pocket, I accepted his offer and sold out. The chicken men had no business in New Orleans, as they had sold in transit, and not one of them had any money; so I called them up to the office, and gave each one money enough to take him back to Cairo."

George Devol, *Forty Years a Gambler on the Mississippi* (New York, 1926), 75-77.

Suit of Submarine Armor

At the "Special Term" of the Police Jury of Concordia Parish, held at Vidalia on March 22, 1859, the following resolution was adopted:

"*Resolved,* That G. W. Green be appointed to procure a suit of submarine armour for the use of the Parish, to be used in case of high water, to examine holes in levees, and that the cost of the same is not to exceed $200, and that amount is hereby appropriated out of the Annual Levee Fund to pay for the same."

Proceedings of the Policy Jury of the Parish of Concordia; Passed at Their Special and Regular Sessions in March, April and July, 1859 (Vidalia, 1859), 6.

A Louisiana Congressman Who Loved the Land— Edward James Gay

"He loved to see the mellow earth turn from the shining share. He loved to see the tender shoots of cane mark the long brown rows with tints of early spring and then grow on until they hid the earth with a continuous canopy of green. He loved to view the fields when under summer suns they lay like a sea at calm, or were stirred by the breeze into emerald waves of loveliness and grace. And when the autumn was well along, and the harvest came, to him whose life had always been an active one, there was a certain excitement in the busy grinding time, when he saw the skillful cutters stretched in line, with rapid blow and gleaming knife, strip and top and fell the standing canes and cast the purple stalks in even rows and piles ready for the wagon's load; when above the sounds of rustling leaves and ringing steel, of rumbling carts and teamster's urgent words, there came the cheery voices of contented labor, which burst at times into a work-song, weird and wild, but full of melody. He loved to see without his factory walls the ruddy glare of furnace-fires, and within the engines go on and on by night and day; and massive rolls crush out the liquid sweets, the amber juices foam and dance with heat and steam, the machines revolve with lightning speed, from which at last emerge the pure and sparkling crystals, the finished product of twelve long months of cost and toil."

From an address by Representative Morton Smith Wilkinson in the House of Representatives, March 22, 1890. "Memorial Addresses on the Life and Character of Edward J. Gay, a Representative from Louisiana," *House Miscellaneous Document* No. 108, 51 Cong., 2 Sess., 9-10.

Spanish-American Boundary Post at the Northwest Corner of the Florida Parishes

Sir William Dunbar (Commissioner for Spain) and Andrew Ellicott (Commissioner for the United States) begin their survey of the 31st parallel boundary line between the United States and Spanish West Florida.

"At the distance of one and two miles . . . were erected square posts, surrounded by mounds . . . and at the distance of 88 French feet in the direction of the parallel of Latitude from the river bank, was erected a squared post of magnitude 10 feet high, surrounded by a mound of earth 8 feet in height. On this point is inscribed on the South Side a crown with the letter R undernearth; on the North U. S., and on the West side fronting the River Agosto 18th, 1798, 31° Lat. N."

"Report of Sir William Dunbar to the Spanish Government at the conclusion of his services in locating and surveying the thirty-first degree of latitude," Mississippi Historical Society *Publications*, III (1900), 187.

Notes and Comments

AFFAIRS OF THE ASSOCIATION

The annual meeting of the Association will be held March 11-12, 1960, in New Orleans, at the Sheraton-Charles Hotel. Joe G. Taylor is chairman of the program committee. Kenneth Trist Urquhart, Executive Secretary, is in charge of local arrangements. The essential reservation and program literature will be sent to members in a separate mailing. The Board of Directors will meet on the evening of March 10.

Progress in the renovation of Memorial Hall and the Confederate Museum exhibits has been steady during the past calendar year. Basic improvement has been in the re-wiring and lighting modernization.

A significant organizational development within the Association took place in August, 1959, when Kenneth Trist Urquhart resigned as president of the Association to take on part-time responsibilities as Executive Secretary, within the renovated offices at Memorial Hall, 929 Camp Street, New Orleans. John S. Kyser, President of Northwestern Louisiana College, and the Association's Vice-President, succeeded Mr. Urquhart as President. Dr. Kyser will continue to serve as President through March, 1961.

The Association will look forward to a visit in February, 1960, by Walter Muir Whitehill of the Boston Athenaeum. Mr. Whitehill is the Director of a study of independent historical societies, an *ad hoc* organization sponsored by the Massachusetts Historical Society, the American Antiquarian Society, the Historical Society of Pennsylvania, and the Virginia Historical Society. The study is being supported by a grant from the Council on Library Resources, Inc., for the purpose of studying the research and publication functions and the financial future of the independent historical societies.

The Association's role in the observation of the Civil War Centennial was the subject of an executive committee planning meeting on December 11, 1959.

In compliance with the Louisiana law on the subject, the list of members belonging to the Association was filed with the Secretary of State on December 15, 1959.

The Association is fortunate, indeed, to have obtained the services of Wilkins Fisk Urquhart to manage the day to day affairs of Memorial Hall, following the retirement of Miss Dora Pool. This cultured head of the Scotch Urquhart clan, Braelingwell, will greet you on your next visit to Memorial Hall.

MEETINGS

The Southern Historical Association held its twenty-fifth annual meeting at the Biltmore Hotel in Atlanta, Georgia, November 12-14. T. Harry Williams, Boyd Professor of History at Louisiana State University, was succeeded as president of the Association by W. B. Hesseltine of the University of Wisconsin. William H. Masterson, Rice Institute, is the current editor of the Association's *Journal of Southern History*.

The Louisiana Genealogical and Historical Society, the Department of History, and the General Extension Division of the Louisiana State University will sponsor the Third Annual Genealogical Institute to be held on the university campus January 8-9, 1960. Harry Wright Newman will deliver a paper on "Southern Migration and the English Background of Early Louisiana Settlers" at the Institute banquet on the evening of January 8, 1960.

The Seventy-Fourth Annual Convention of the American Historical Association was held in Chicago, Illinois, at the Conrad Hilton Hotel, December 28, 29, 30. Numerous other professional groups held joint meetings with the Association. It is one hope of the Louisiana Historical Association that at our regular annual March meetings the various state and local organizations in fields related to our own activities will see fit to hold joint-sessions with us. The geographers, folklorists, genealogists, students of state and local government and politics, musicologists, museum people, landmarks people, and librarians, all have an interest in state and local history, and all have much to offer in the way of a better understanding of how our state, its communities, and its citizenry came to be what they are today.

Mrs. Martha G. Robinson of the Louisiana Landmarks Society called a meeting of interested people from all over the state to meet with her group in New Orleans on December 11, 1959. Organizational problems discussed at that meeting will be reported later.

LIBRARIES AND ARCHIVES

During the past year, three major libraries in Louisiana have been formally dedicated. These are the Louisiana State Library, the Louisiana State University Library, and the New Orleans Public Library. These three structures alone involved total capital outlays of approximately $8,000,000.

An appropriation bill providing $300,000 for a warehouse-type archives and records center for the State was unanimously passed by the House of Representatives during the regular session of the 1959 Legislature. $100,000 of the total in this bill would have been used for such things as shelving, lamination, microfilming, and decontamination equipment. With many other worthy measures, the bill died in the Senate. The proposed building would have been patterned after that constructed by the State of Michigan following that state's disastrous state house fire.

Louisiana State University's first honorary doctorate awarded to a woman was presented to State Librarian Essae Martha Culver during the Centennial observances marking the dedication of the new Louisiana State University Library.

During August, 1959, the State Archives and Records Commission offices were moved from subterranean areas in the Capitol to the renovated old Peabody Hall, just back of the new State Library building on Third Street, in Baton Rouge. Current activities of the Commission largely involve the identification and elimination of useless records in major record producing agencies, and the operation of a small semi-centralized microfilming unit (6 cameras). The cameras acquired by the Commission can do most every job currently required by state and local agencies of the government, except to provide microfilm copies of x-ray photographs. Major offices served and being served include: Secretary of State, State Comptroller, Attorney General, Pardon Board, Louisiana Tax Commission, Louisiana Department of Highways, State Forestry Commission, and the Department of Agriculture. While the Commission's facilities are clean, well-kept, and accessible, archives and other records cannot be accepted for deposit and preservation owing to the lack of an adequately-equipped, fire-proof building.

PERSONALS

The History Department, Tulane University: *Promotions:* John L. Snell to professor; W. Burlie Brown to associate professor; Hugh F.

Rankin to assistant professor. *New Appointments:* Hans A. Schmitt, formerly at the University of Oklahoma, associate professor. *Leaves of Absence:* Charles T. Davis and Gerald M. Capers, both for research on projects for which they were awarded Guggenheim Fellowships; John L. Snell to serve as Executive Director of Committee on Graduate Education in History; and for 1960-61, Charles P. Roland (Guggenheim Fellowship) and Thomas L. Karnes (first semester).

The Department of History, Louisiana State University: *New Appointment:* Patrick Lipscomb, III, instructor; *Leaves of Absence:* T. Harry Williams; Robert B. Holtman, second semester; Walter C. Richardson, second semester, to serve as visiting professor of history, University of Texas.

The Department of Social Studies, Southwestern Louisiana Institute: *New Appointments:* Robert M. Albert, assistant professor of history; Paul J. Stewart, Jr., assistant professor of history; and Robert R. Miller, assistant professor of history. *Resignations:* Paul K. Conkin to accept a position with the University of Maryland; Roy B. Scott to accept a position at the University of Missouri.

Northwestern State College's Department of Social Studies: *New Appointments:* Jacques A. Brown, assistant professor; and Ruth C. Cowen, instructor.

The Department of Social Studies, Southeastern Louisiana College: *Promotion:* Harold Leu to the rank of professor. *New Appointment:* Wayne Newkirk, assistant professor. Howard Nichols has returned from military leave.

St. Mary's Dominican College: *Promotion:* Sister Mary Eugene, O.P., associate professor of history, to academic dean.

ALLIED ORGANIZATIONS

The Louisiana Genealogical and Historical Society recently deposited its collections of genealogical and historical material in the Louisiana State Library.

The Morgan City Historical Society, Bob McChesney, President, and C. J. Peltier, Advisor, is preparing a nine-chapter history of Morgan City, which the Society hopes to have ready for publication on March 31, 1960, in time for the Morgan City Centennial.

The Friends of the Cabildo, Mrs. Arthur Quentin Davis, President, is waging a campaign to change the makeup of the State

Museum Board, and to obtain sufficient financial support for urgent needs of the buildings in the State Museum's custody.

The Opelousas Tourist Center and Museum recently acquired the Jim Bowie Knife Collection from Mr. Ben Prather of Alexandria.

The Central Louisiana Historical Society now issues a quarterly *News Letter,* and its members recently went on a guided tour of the route of the Red River Campaign of 1864.

President John S. Kyser of this Association is also president of the North Louisiana Historical Association. During the past year, Max V. Bradbury has been producing and issuing a most creditable *News Letter.* The Association members met on December 6, in Shreveport, to hear a paper by George A. Stokes.

The very active Restoration of Colonial Natchitoches, Inc., made a strong effort to obtain restoration funds during the 1959 session of the State Legislature. Eugene P. Watson, Northwestern's librarian, is president of the group.

The Louisiana Division, United Daughters of the Confederacy, is working hard to get the Port Hudson Battle site declared and maintained as a State Historical Park under the Louisiana Parks and Recreation Commission.

The Book Club of Pointe Coupee Parish is engaged in the compilation of a history of the Parish, 1699-1865, based in large part on the records in the courthouse.

The New Orleans Cultural Center Commission, Alfred J. Moran, President, is providing meeting facilities to numerous historical groups in the Crescent City. The old City Hall is now designated Gallier Hall.

One of the state's most active groups is the Louisiana Colonials of New Iberia. This group will eventually provide a local organization to sponsor the most effective use of "The Shadows." Miss Alice A. Gates is president of the group.

Donald J. Millet, who served as chairman of this Association's committee to select Louisiana entries for the 1,500-word essay contest on "Reflections While Standing Before the Lincoln Memorial," has been chosen President of the Southwest Louisiana Historical Society.

The Feliciana Garden and Pilgrimage Club has been working hard in recent years to raise sufficient funds for the restoration of "Marston House."

MISCELLANY

F. M. Rosentreter and the Department of Social Sciences at Northwestern State College are engaged in a study of the teaching of history by means of television.

George A. Stokes of the Northwestern State College faculty is in charge of the reorganization and renovation of the Williamson Museum. There is much of Louisiana historical interest in the collections.

Margaret Burke Sabadie, assistant librarian at St. Mary's Dominican College, shepherded a three months tour of Dominican students and friends of the college through Europe last summer. Another tour will be sponsored next summer.

The November, 1959, issue of the North Louisiana Historical Association's *New Letter* has a well written article on the Russell Family, authored by Katherine Bridges of the Russell Library at Northwestern State College.

Curt Siegelin, Executive Director of the Department of Commerce and Industry, has approved a suggestion of this Associations' Board which will result eventually in the setting up of an appropriate historical marker at the point where the Airline Highway crosses Bayou Manchac, just south of Baton Rouge.

History News, November, 1959, notes that North Carolina and Mississippi are the only two southern states which handle all their historical activities—library, records, museum, markers, sites—through one agency. North Carolina has forty-four employees and a biennial appropriation of $680,070. Mississippi has nine employees, and is now asking $246,492 for an expanded program in the Old Capitol.

The Board of Curators of the State Historical Society of Wisconsin announced the installation of Dr. Leslie H. Fishel, Jr., as Director of the Society, October 31, 1959.

Washington Parish will soon have a Veteran's Memorial listing the names of 3,147 soldiers from the parish, 1777-1950. The memorial will be located in Franklinton.

A NOTE OF APPRECIATION

The editors wish to thank Ernst Seemann, of the Louisiana State University Press, for designing the format of *Louisiana History*. Mr. Seemann prepared three complete sets of designs and the final selection was made after conferences with Donald Ellegood, Director of the Louisiana State University Press, John C. L. Andreassen, Director, State Archives and Records Commission, and Mrs. Inez W. Land and Francis Holliday of the Franklin Press.

Book Reviews

THE FRENCH IN NORTH AMERICA. A Bibliographical Guide to French Archives, Reproductions, and Research Missions. By Henry Putney Beers. (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press. xi, 413 pp. Notes, appendices, bibliography, index. $12.50.)

This volume has been of long and sure fashioning. It will be enduring. Mr. Beers set himself to the task of writing a history of reproductions of documentary materials which have been sought out in France and have been brought to America by scholars and institutions of the United States and Canada. By bringing together all possible information about the purpose and achievement of each researcher from the American Revolution to the present Mr. Beers has completed his work in a notably accurate and comprehensive form. His title reveals exactly the purpose and extent of his work, but it scarcely reveals the penetrating thought and the warmth of the presentation that make the volume distinct from ordinary compilations. It was intended for, and that it will be, a constant companion for historians, librarians, and archivists concerned with the activities of the French on this continent.

For his description in the first chapter of the origin, development, and reforms of the French archival depots, Mr. Beers cites more than a hundred authorities who at various times described the state of the depositories and their deposits. In the next chapter he records the contributions of the "Historians of American Diplomacy," beginning with Jared Sparks, whose interest in Franco-American relations led them to obtain transcripts of the French public records. A long chapter tells of the "Historians of the French Regime in America," and of the gradual widening of the search for transcripts in Britain and Spain. Classifying the historians as "earlier" and "scientific," Mr. Beers offers many instructive sidelights on the character of the men and the difficulties of their quest. He follows with an account of the efforts of "State Institutions and Libraries" to obtain and preserve transcripts, photostats, and films from France. Separate chapters are reserved for the activity of The Carnegie Institution of Washington, the Library of Congress, and Canadian institutions and historians.

The narrative does far more than breathe information. It is punctuated with judicious criticism and with suggestions for further

research on historical points hitherto thought to be canonized. There are indications of muddled writing due to the inept use of materials or the faultiness of transcriptions. These suggestions will spur American librarians to obtain films of original documents for checking some of their prized transcripts and will force scholars to beware of doctored materials. A selective bibliography is presented which will be of great assistance to those who make it their task to follow Mr. Beer's suggestions for the production of a more definitive history of the French in America.

Scholars will be pleased with the excellent closing chapter containing the author's conclusions. The objective for which the Mississippi Valley Historial Association was formed, has still to be fulfilled, for, despite the work of the Carnegie Institution over long years, "the need for a comprehensive publication of French documents still exists." Transcripts of the last century, scattered in libraries over the country and generally on specialized topics, are practically useless. Mr. Beers designates neglected areas and proposes a vast cooperative effort toward obtaining all pertinent documents. This book should bring about a renascence in Franco-American studies and should prove an inspiration to a new generation of historians.

Loyola University, Chicago. JEROME V. JACOBSEN

HISTOIRE DE LA LOUISIANE FRANCAISE: Annes de Transition, 1715-1717. Vol. II. By Marcel Giraud. (Paris: Presses Universitaires de Franch, 1958. vi, 208 pp. Maps, notes, bibliography, index. 900 francs.)

Marcel Giraud, Professor in the College de France, is in the process of writing a definitive history of French Louisiana. His study of the Louisiana colony in the reign of Louis XIV was published in 1953. In this, his second volume, he continues the story during the years 1715-1717—years of transition: a period between a dismal past and a brighter future.

During the first years of the Regency, the responsibility for colonial affairs was assumed by the Ministry of Marine. Antoine Crozat gave up his monopolies and this study concludes on the eve of the assumption of the control of Louisiana by the Company of the West.

The transition years were not years of progress. Crozat and other interested men put forward plans on how to populate the colony, improve its agriculture and commerce, exploit its mineral wealth,

improve Indian relations, check British encroachments, and expand trade and territory westwards. Tentative steps were taken to put some of the plans into effect but no decisive results were obtained because the finances of the kingdom were inadequate to see them through.

The author describes the government and leaders of the colony, its defenses, its economy, its people, the expansion into the interior, Indian policy, and Anglo-French and Franco-Spanish rivalries and tensions. The story is one of struggle and frustration, discontent and bickering, inaction and indifference.

Professor Giraud's scholarly work is a valuable addition to the literature of Louisiana colonial history. It is to be hoped that he will complete his history of Louisiana in the near future and that an English translation will be forthcoming.

Francis T. Nicholls State College PHILIP D. UZEE

LOUISIANA STATE UNIVERSITY: A Pictorial Record of the Past Hundred Years. By Vergil L. Bedsole and Oscar Richard. Introduction by T. Harry Williams. (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1959. vii, 112 pp. Appendix. $2.95.)

This slender volume is precisely what the title says it is. It is a pictorial record of the first hundred years of the Louisiana State University from its modest beginnings in Pineville, Louisiana, to the present extensive campus in Baton Rouge—from the first president of the university, General William Tecumseh Sherman in 1859, to General Troy H. Middleton in 1959.

During this hundred-year period Louisiana State University has grown from one college to 20 colleges or divisions. It has enrolled to the present time 244,018 students with 24,844 undergraduate degrees conferred; 5,330 professional degrees have been conferred and 8,471 graduate degrees. These statistics are indicative of Louisiana State University's services to the State of Louisiana. The growth of the campus is another physical evidence of its importance in higher education.

This physical growth of the campus stands out most forcefully in the book which is exceptionally well done. The pictures are well selected and well reproduced, giving the book a very pleasing appearance. This reviewer regrets, however, that the pictures were not

accompanied by more text which would give a narrative account of the university's history. Obviously this was also in the mind of Professor Williams who wrote in his introduction: "Such a record is needed and undoubtedly will be written in the near future." When such a history is written the present volume will afford fine illustrative material for the book.

Tulane University — JOHN P. DYER

RED RIVER CAMPAIGN: Politics and Cotton in the Civil War. By Ludwell H. Johnson. (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1958. 318 pp. Illustrations, bibliography, index. $5.00.)

The principal theme of this book is that the Red River campaign of 1864 was not entirely military, but was entertwined with politics and cotton speculators. Mr. Johnson states his objectives as: (1) To show that Civil War campaigns sprang from complex circumstances, sometimes wholly non-military; (2) To fill a gap in the military history of the war west of the Mississippi River; (3) To show the influence of cotton and cotton speculators in the Red River campaign; (4) To shed additional light on the characters of some of the campaign's principal figures.

In ten chapters and by the use of recognized standards of scholarship, Mr. Johnson succeeds in accomplishing his objectives in a satisfactory manner, in the judgment of this reviewer. He makes out a good case that factors, other than military, were involved in launching the campaign. His presentation of the role of cotton and cotton speculators is skillfully interwoven with the military story. He presents the evidence and then proceeds to analyze the situation and draws his conclusion. His character sketches add much to the understanding of the story. The result is a distinct contribution to the literature of the war west of the Mississippi River.

The maps, illustrating the deployment of military units during each engagement and especially that of Sabine Cross Roads, give a clearer understanding of the battles and the outcome. The bibliography and index are extensive and add to the usefulness of the volume. His narrative is direct and clear. The author's theorizing on what might have been is at least stimulating. There is need for more studies like this one.

Louisiana Polytechnic Institute — G. W. MCGINTY

WILLIAM T. PORTER AND THE SPIRIT OF THE TIMES, A Study of the Big Bear School of Humor. By Norris W. Yates. (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1957. xi, 222 pp. Illustrated, bibliographical note, index. $5.00.)

The New York *Spirit of the Times* (1831-1861), perhaps the most popular pre-Civil War magazine for Southern gentlemen, was founded by William Trotter Porter as a sporting journal, specializing in horse racing. At first his only literary offerings were reprints from English magazines. Later he began reprinting stories from American newspapers, and after a trip to the South and West in 1838 he began to encourage the gentlemen he had met there to write him accounts of their hunts and sporting adventures and sketches of life and character in the backwoods and on the Southwestern frontier. Planters of Arkansas, Louisiana, Mississippi, and other states, and garrison officers on the Western frontier responded to his encouragement by sending him lively letters and stories of their experiences. By bringing these writers to a national audience, Porter's magazine helped to create an important tradition of comic realism and tall tale telling which was to flower in the work of Mark Twain.

Dr. Yates's valuable study has a twofold purpose: to examine the influence of the journal and that of its editor on the regional writing of the Old Southwest. Primarily a work of literary history and criticism, the book will also be useful to students of history and folklore. The research is excellent; the documentation full and useful for the specialist.

Even more important than the author's careful scholarship are his critical evaluations of the Old Southwest's comic realism. He examines the evolution, the major significances, the variety, and the complexity of these backwoods and frontier tales. In contrast to earlier studies of the *genre*, which have emphasized folk elements in the tales, the author brings to this study a greater appreciation of their literary quality and their broadly political and sociological uses.

The first two chapters sketch the background and tastes of the genial William T. Porter, who once said of himself that his evident mission on earth was to oblige everybody. In spite of the paucity of primary material available about Porter's life, the author has done a skillful job of marshalling his information, and his generalizations are always offered unpretentiously and with amiable humor.

The central chapters study the *Spirit's* writers to reveal the gentleman's point of view through which was refracted the experience of

the Southwestern backwoodsmen and frontiersmen. The chapter titled "Jugs, Jokers, Fights, and Frolics," deals with the moral code of the squatter, with his interest in hunting, racing, rough and tumble fighting, frolics, and with his attitude toward women and sex. The last mentioned is of particular interest because the journal was prepared for a masculine audience and consequenlty is far more robust than the Victorian proprieties of the times usually allowed. Dr. Yates points up the fact that, until the journal ceased publication in 1861—Porter had died in 1858 and his successors discontinued the magazine when war stopped mail service to the Confederate States—it created our most complete account of the professional and planter class's version of the life of the poorer white squatters, backwoodsmen, and hunters of the Old Southwest.

Of particular interest to Louisiana readers will be the discussions of Louisiana correspondents, the many tales laid in Louisiana, and the importance of Louisiana newspapers as sources of stories about riverboatmen and back country characters. More yarns were reprinted from the *Picayune*, Dr. Yates observes, "than from any other exchange source, with the possible exception of the St. Louis *Reveille*." The work includes discussions of the contributions of Thomas Bangs Thorpe of the Felicianas, Robert Patterson of Concordia, Dr. Henry Clay Lewis of Madison and Tensas parishes, and others.

Finally, the style of the book deserves mention. The author retells a number of the tales to illustrate their subjects and manner, and is uniformly skillful in retaining the salty tang of the original stories, which, history, criticism, and sociology aside, are well resurrected. So lively, humorous, and unpretentious a book is as pleasant as it is enlightening.

Southwestern Louisiana Institute MILTON RICKELS

HUEY LONG'S LOUISIANA: State Politics, 1920-1952. By Allan P. Sindler. (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1956. xv, 316 pp. Maps, tables, bibliography, index. $5.50.)

Professor Sindler, a political scientist, has written one of the best historical accounts of the Long movement yet to appear. Employing the techniques of his trade, including tables, charts, and sometimes a too ponderous terminology, he subjects Pelican state politics to a detailed analysis. Incidentally, his title is misleading, as only 70 of the 286 pages deal with Huey Long; the emphasis is upon events coming after 1935.

In summary, the author sees the Long movement originating in class tensions; it was an expression of what Professor Sindler calls the "lower-class whites," and was fated to erupt regardless of whether Huey Long had appeared on the Louisiana scene. Longism has survived because it has continued to gratify the desires of the masses. Correspondingly, the opposition has failed whenever it has forgotten to continue the welfare program inaugurated by the Longs. This, of course, is the impersonal analysis of the social scientist and ignores the influence of the dynamic leader in politics. In the opinion of this reviewer, it is open to serious question.

Professor Sindler's book is good, but it has some shortcomings. Notably, it takes too academic a view of politics, judging the process from an ideal rather than a practical standard. The politics of any state is too complex to be understood from the study alone, and Louisiana politics is more complex than most. Professor Sindler's account is admirable as a collection of information, but it lacks a certain realism.

Louisiana State University T. Harry Williams

LOUISIANA SUGAR PLANTATIONS DURING THE AMERICAN CIVIL WAR. By Charles P. Roland. (Leiden, Holland: E. J. Brill, 1957. x, 150 pp. Notes, bibliography, index. 15 guilders.)

In this short study Professor Roland has described the effects of secession, civil war, and military occupation on Louisiana sugar plantations. In one place or another the author discusses or at least mentions most of the significant aspects of plantation life during the crisis of war.

Basing his study on a multiplicity of sources, but primarily on the records of large planters, the statements of travelers, the reminiscences of articulate Southerners and Northerners who fought, visited or resided in the South, regimental histories, and New Orleans newspapers, the author presents a well-written, interesting narrative of the destruction and deterioration of not only an industry, but also a way of life. After two introductory chapters a description of plantation life and labor at various stages of the conflict is presented. The author moves from a discussion of the situation at the time of secession to a description of the conditions on the eve of invasion. Then attention is paid to the effects of blockade and invasion and to the destructive results of military operations and occupation. There is also an interesting discussion of labor problems in the war-torn sugar belt.

The conclusions reached by the author are not unexpected. This study confirms that most of the planters discontinued their plantation operations; that those who did not were either unionist or pseudo-unionist in sympathy; that many planters abandoned their estates and moved westward away from the zones of occupation; that labor was generally unavailable in sufficient quantities; that when it was available it was usually unreliable; that the representatives of the federal government failed to understand the difficulties of wartime sugar cane culture and sugar manufacture and through this lack of comprehension often compounded the difficulties of the planters; and that the conflict destroyed the old sugar regime and along with other reasons prevented the development of a new system for a decade and a half.

This work is a significant addition to Louisiana historiography. However, its value would have been increased had a map of the sugar region been included. Questions could be raised concerning some of the author's general statements in the first three chapters, but this is always the case. Furthermore, even the questionable points (the author's comments on such topics as the "plantation ideal," transportation and communication, and class relations) does not measurably detract from his study of the sugar plantations during the period of strife.

McNeese State College RALEIGH A. SUAREZ

THE ANGRY SCAR: The Story of Reconstruction. By Hodding Carter. (Garden City: Doubleday, 1959. 425 pp. Bibliography, index. $5.95.)

Whether viewed from North or South of the Mason-Dixon Line, the Reconstruction period was a dismal one. Once again this fact has been made crystal clear in Hodding Carter's *The Angry Scar.*

Mr. Carter's book is a synthesis of the best secondary sources on the subject. It thus includes materials from the two basic interpretations of the Reconstruction period. Much will be palatable to Southerners, much to Northerners, and contrariwise. For comfort's sake, both must remember that this period was in Mr. Carter's inimitable words, "the most unchallengeable evidence of the complexity and the inconsistency of political man."

The book covers all phases and facets of this tragic period. The arrangement is topical. The whole is illumined with excellent and

lively quotations from diaries, newspapers, etc. Accompanying each important character is an interesting and pertinant summary of background material. In fact, the human element looms large in the entire book. Of the Southerner, Radical, and Negro, the author reiterates many times that they would have been less than human, or super-human, had they acted other than they did.

The last chapter, "Heritage," gives complete meaning to the title. The scar left by the Federal government's assumption of race relations eighty years ago is again angry from blows directed today to the same purpose. "And the end is not in sight." These words complete the book.

Among the very few errors of fact, there is one which, though minor perhaps, a Louisianian feels should not be overlooked. In the concluding remarks on P. B. S. Pinchback, Mr. Carter says, "but the principal political offense that damned him in Louisiana was that he was not white." (p. 262) This is hardly a tenable statement.

The book is brilliantly written, is entertaining, and should be profitable to all those who have not read the major sources upon which it is based.

Southeastern Louisiana College MARTINA E. BUCK

PARSON CLAPP OF THE STRANGERS' CHURCH OF NEW ORLEANS. Edited by John Duffy. (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1957. xii, 191 pp. Illustrated, portrait, bibliography. $5.00.)

The historian's task is difficult since he must collect facts as reported by those who witnessed the events under study. The historian cannot reenact an event as the laboratory scientist is able to do. He must interpret historical happenings as reported by others. His job is to evaluate how accurate were the reporters' observations since his thesis will be based on these facts. Hence lies the importance of Dr. Theodore Clapp or Parson Clapp as he was known to his contemporaries in New Orleans. As the editor of his autobiography, Dr. John Duffy states he was in no sense a great man, but for the historian he was a shrewd observer.

In some respects one's center of interest shifts from the description of ante-bellum New Orleans so vividly described by Parson Clapp to the editor's presentation of the religious setting of early nineteenth century America, so well is this told. Any student of American his-

tory could read the introductory chapters with profit for this purpose alone. Parson Clapp was unusual in many respects. He certainly was no conformist. His religious views were probably his reaction or rebellion against the stern puritanical God of his generation. To one of his nature, New Orleans provided a natural setting. He could believe what he wished in the tolerant and fun loving city of New Orleans. His inquiring mind took in the scene about him and he faithfully recorded for future generations to ponder about the terrifying epidemics, the religion, and other significant events that were part of New Orleans. Because, as stated by the editor, he had the rare capacity for maintaining objectivity without losing compassion, he gave us a valuable document of the happenings in the city. He not only saw, but he lived his report.

The editor is to be congratulated for the skill in which he presented the setting, story, and recordings of Parson Clapp of the Strangers' Church.

Louisiana State University
School of Medicine

WILLIAM D. POSTELL

THE JOURNAL OF JEAN LAFFITE: The Privateer-Patriot's Own Story. (New York: Vantage Press, 1958. 153 pp. Illustrations. $3.50.)

In a series of autobiographical accounts dated from 1845 to 1850, *The Journal of Jean Laffite* chronicles the career of that historically elusive person from his childhood in Port-au-Prince to the middle of the nineteenth century. It covers his career of privateering and smuggling and the part he played in the Battle of New Orleans, the conspiracy in the western part of the United States, the Latin American independence movements, and the liberal movements of the 1830's and 1840's. If authentic, *The Journal* certainly can contribute to an understanding of Laffite himself and the period in which he lived by providing scholars with such valuable information as the financial support of Marx and Engels in 1847 "to help bring about the revolution of working men of the world."

If *The Journal of Jean Laffite,* subtitled *The Privateer-Patriot's Own Story,* is authentic, why is this first edition technically so shoddy? It contains neither a table of contents nor an index, and in a total of 144 pages of text there are only 8 footnotes. It claims to be a translation from the original French, but neither a translator nor an editor is named. The only attempt at authentication is an illustration of a French manuscript with a superimposed typed letter

from the Manuscripts Division of the Library of Congress addressed to an unidentified "Dear Mr." The Library of Congress letter merely states that the specimens it examined appeared to be of 1830 vintage or earlier. Therefore, until further acceptable authentication is offered, which would warrant a technically better edition, *The Journal of Jean Laffite* should be read only with extreme caution.

Loyola University, New Orleans PETER J. CANGELOSI

RELUCTANT REBEL: The Secret Diary of Robert Patrick, 1861-1865. Edited by F. Jay Taylor. (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1959. xii, 271 pp. Illustrated, maps, appendix, index. $5.00.)

Robert Patrick of Clinton, Louisiana, was a Confederate soldier who faithfully recorded what he saw and thought during the Civil War. Except for a brief stint in the battle of Shiloh, Patrick was not a combatant, and he forthright admits that he sought an easy position in the army. Most of his service was spent as a clerk in the Commissary and Quartermaster departments. Thus his diary illuminates the daily affairs of these rear-echelon divisions; and his observations support the complaints of Confederate fighting men that they were too often failed by the services of supply. Patrick charges frequent incompetence, favoritism, obstinacy, and drunkenness among his superiors. Possibly he exaggerates the evils, and one must recognize that the diarist's view was limited. Nevertheless, Patrick wrote with convincing candor and perceptiveness.

Patrick bears witness to the travail of the South. The overwhelming of her armies; the pillage of her homes and fields by troops of both sides; the waning of her will to resist; and the ultimate dissolution of her forces: these form his major theme. Yet Patrick's own story is not lost in the telling of the greater one; his chronicle is that of fullness given way to hunger, of strength to exhaustion, of health to sickness, and of confidence to despair. Pungent with comment on ill-favored Confederate leaders and with musing on his own amours, Patrick's diary is an authentic record of one man's experience in the supreme American experience.

Editor Taylor is to be commended for bringing out this interesting diary and for his excellent introduction and explanatory material.

Tulane University CHARLES P. ROLAND

J. D. B. DeBOW, Magazinist in the Old South. By Ottis Clark Skipper. (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1958. x, 269 pp. Illustrations, bibliography, appendix, index. $5.00.)

In a little over twenty years (1846-1867), J. D. B. DeBow wrote and edited "some fifty thousand pages" of a "record of Southern resources and enterprises and of schemes for betterment and apprehensions." Although a champion of "lost causes"—slavery, the Confederacy, Southern industrialization, and profitable Southern publishing—DeBow yet managed, in spite of war, economic upheaval, and social revolution, to build a successful, profitable career and to leave a rich fund of information about life and business in the Old South.

Professor Skipper in surveying DeBow's career has made a notable contribution to Southern history. Faced with evaluating "some fifty thousand pages," much of it "appalling dull," Professor Skipper was bound to slight materials of interest to various specialists; and literary scholars, for example, who have used DeBow's *Review* will be somewhat disappointed with the brief attention given to literature. All should, however, be impressed with Professor Skipper's skill in the handling of the material and satisfied with the fairness of his total view.

The principal fault of the book, to my mind, is one that is perhaps inherent in the subject matter. In three chapters, Professor Skipper attempts to treat of the man DeBow rather than his works, but there is no consistent attempt to relate the total career with the total life. The three "biographical chapters" thus seem isolated from what is essentially a "bibliographical" study and disturb the focus of the book. This is a most informative book about the old South; it is not a "definitive biography" of James DeBow, who probably does not need one. DeBow, like Chaucer's Merchant, was a man whose activities affected the course of empire, but the humanist finds it a chore to remember his name. Professor Skipper has helped here. The name is James DeBow.

Southwestern Louisiana Institute PAUL T. NOLAN